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## Heroes of the Nations

A Series of Biographical Studies presenting the lives and work of certain representative historical characters, about whom have gathered the traditions of the nations to which they belong, and who have, in the majority of instances, been accepted as types of the several national ideals.

FOR FULL LIST SEE END OF THIS VOLUME

# Heroes of the Nations

EDITED BY

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FELLOW OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD

FACTA DUCIB VIVENT, OPEROSAQUE  
GLORIA RERUM.—OVID, IN LIVIAM 265.  
THE HERO'S DEEDS AND HARD-WON  
FAME SHALL LIVE.

## SAINT LOUIS





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SAINT LOUIS.

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# SAINT LOUIS

(LOUIS IX. OF FRANCE)

## THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING

BY

FREDERICK PERRY, M.A.

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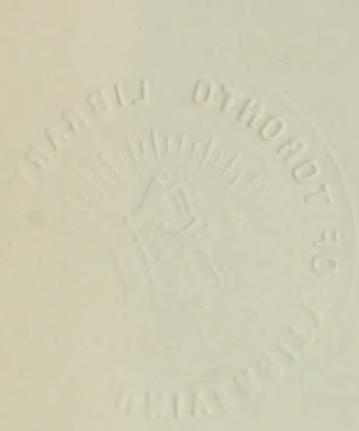
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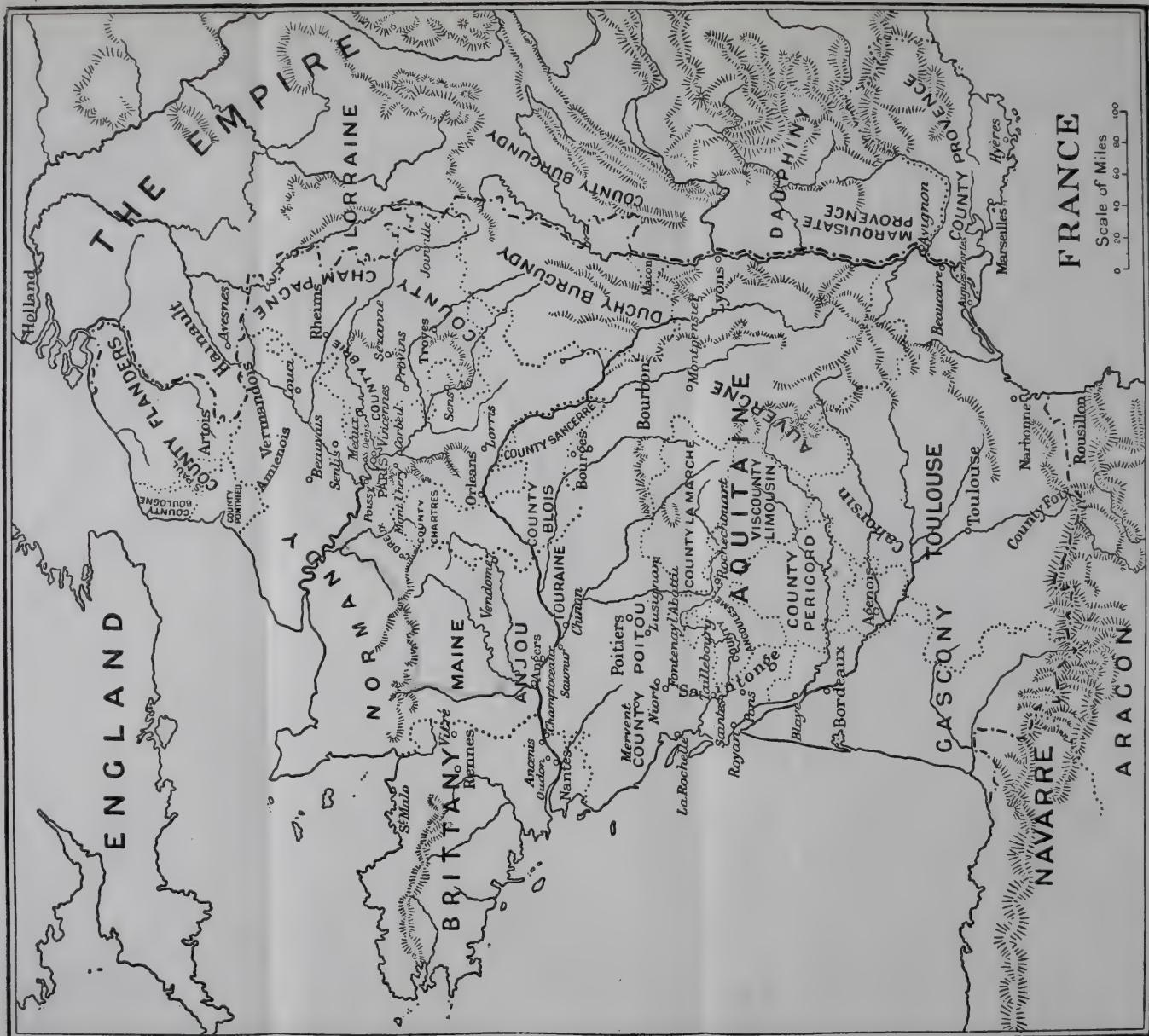
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ST. LOUIS



MAP OF FRANCE, 1250.

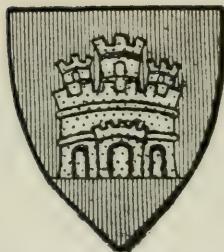
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MAP OF FRANCE. 1250.



THE KING OF FRANCE



THE KING OF CASTILE

# SAINT LOUIS

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## CHAPTER I

THE KINGDOM OF FRANCE BEFORE THE ACCES-  
SION OF LOUIS IX.

AFTER the decay of the line sprung from Charlemagne, the country of France was divided into several states ruled by Dukes or Counts. The House of Capet claimed the title and prerogative of King; their ancestor Hugh having been elected, by his peers and by the assembly of the kingdom, to the throne vacant through the death of Louis the Idler, in the year 987 after Christ. But for about two hundred years the princes descended from him had little power outside their own patrimonial territories, which lay in the centre of Northern France between the basins of the rivers Seine and Loire, and were fertile and flourishing though not large, containing two populous towns, Paris and Orleans. They were bordered on all sides by great principalities whose rulers professed to recognise the suzerainty of the Capetians; paid

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them homage on accession, and sometimes sent contingents to their armies; but, behaving in most things as equal sovereigns, did not hesitate to levy war against them, and never admitted royal interference or control within their own states.

Nevertheless, in spite of the weakness of the monarchs, the kingly title and idea remained, as it did in the neighbouring country of Germany. There, during this period, the supreme authority was stronger; but the French Kings had two advantages over the German rulers. First, they preserved the succession of a single family. Second, the latter burdened themselves with the Imperial crown; and instead of confirming and increasing their strength at home, were diverted to Italian conquests, and to disputing with the Popes the claim of supremacy in Christendom. The former on the other hand, as they did not waste their strength, or stir up enemies by such an undertaking, were able to extend themselves by degrees, and to take the opportunities that offered of asserting their sovereignty. Moreover in doing this they generally had the support instead of the enmity of the Church, for the Popes were inclined to favour their growth, as a balance to the Emperor; and the clergy of France, less powerful than in Germany, regarded them as protectors against the oppression of the lay feudatories, their neighbours.

The first task of the French Kings was to establish their power firmly in their paternal domains; the next, to weaken, subdue, and bring into control the independent princes whom they called their vassals,

and so regain over France the sole monarchy of Charlemagne. They were masters of their own immediate subjects by the middle of the twelfth century, chiefly owing to the vigorous and warlike rule of Louis VI. In the course of the next hundred and fifty years they vindicated their authority over the whole kingdom. Part of the vassal territories they took for their own, dispossessing the original rulers. Part remained under their native princes, who were no longer able, as formerly, to defy the King's pretensions and treat with him from an equal or better footing. He became their superior in strength as well as in title; his royal prerogative, which long had lain asleep and almost forgotten, was revived and enforced; and when they opposed him it was rather in the character of overgrown subjects than of independent sovereigns.

The period of expansion spreads through three successive reigns; not that it absolutely began, as it did not end with them. But the previous kings were too feebly seated in the dominions they had, to be very active in increasing them; and those that followed were already great and mighty monarchs, and the acquisitions they made were easy compared to the first; for they gathered up, by their own weight and force, the scattered fragments that lay round, as great bodies attract small. Earlier, however, the mass was still broken and dismembered, with no portion much preponderant over the other; and it was, as has been said, the policy and fortune of three reigns which drew the parts into a whole, and made France united and a nation.

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Before proceeding with this subject it will be convenient to mention the chief of the vassal provinces which the realm contained. In the north was the county of Flanders, where the towns were already populous and rich with manufactures and commerce; and for that reason turbulent towards their rulers. The old dynasty of Counts, which had been closely allied with the French Kings, failed early in the twelfth century; and their successors inclined to lean upon the patronage and support of England. In the west the duchy of Brittany, of which the inhabitants, by the peculiar manners and institutions belonging to their Celtic race, and the savageness of their nature, which corresponded to the region, were, more than any other province, isolated and alien from their neighbours. To the north-east of Brittany lay the duchy of Normandy, occupied by an industrious people and a fierce and intelligent nobility. Below it the Counts of Anjou, who were constantly embroiled with the Norman princes, disputing against them possession of the province of Maine which separated their borders. South of the Loire the Dukes of Aquitaine ruled as far as the Pyrenees, and were raised to the station of great sovereigns by the extent of their dominions, the numbers and valour of their subjects, and the maritime commerce which flourished along their coasts. But the free and martial spirit of their vassals, especially in Gascony, while it secured them against subjugation from outside, was a frequent source of domestic disturbance.

South-east of Aquitaine was the rich country of

Languedoc, where the Counts of Toulouse were supreme. In this province the Romans in their conquest and occupation of Gaul had taken deeper root. The traditions if not the institutions of their government had survived ; and, at the period spoken of, the luxurious and comfortable life of the inhabitants, their manners, more civilised than in the north, and the greater freedom, activity, and self-esteem of the trading and industrial class of people, might recall the ages before the barbaric invasion, when Western Europe still rested in the shadow of a peaceful and well-ordered empire. On the farther bank of the Rhone, the country of Provence, resembling Languedoc in its conditions, customs, and the character of its inhabitants, Dauphiny, and the county of Burgundy, which to-day are an integral part of France, though occupied then by men of kindred race and language, were still in the thirteenth century dependencies of the Emperor.

The bounds of France, as it then was, included the duchy of Burgundy. The rulers of this territory were not formidable or important, being distracted by quarrels with their own subjects, especially the prelates, whose power and possessions were greater there than in any other part of the realm. Next came the domain of the family styling itself Counts of Champagne. They had inherited or acquired the five counties of Chartres, Blois, Sancerre, Champagne, and Brie, which lay like a chain round the east, south, and west of the royal patrimony. Touching Burgundy on the south and Vermandois

on the north, they completed the circle of principalities by which the King was surrounded.

In the latter half of the eleventh century the Duke of Normandy, whose ancestors had been since their settlement the strongest princes of the north, and had least regarded the authority of the Capetians, invaded and conquered England. This event changed the balance of power in France. The acquisition of a kingdom separated by the sea raised the Norman Dukes to a titular level with their suzerain, of whom they became wholly independent in respect of their new possessions. From this time their dealings began to be on a fresh footing, and the French Kings profited by the change. For although their adversary vastly increased his territories and military resources, the centre of his interests was removed from France, his aims and position were dissevered from those of the other great vassals; and Normandy, having become an outlying and in some sort dependent province of England, was by degrees less able or anxious to resist absorption than when it stood alone and maintained itself a separate and almost sovereign state. Ninety years after the conquest of England the Norman House was merged by marriage in that of Anjou; and acquired by a further marriage the inheritance of Aquitaine. The English King was then the greatest potentate in France both north and south of the Loire. But the very extent and diversity of his dominions made him too weak to overwhelm and swallow up his brother at Paris. The difference of customs and manners, language

and interests which prevailed between England and Normandy and Anjou and Aquitaine; the distance which divided them; and their mutual jealousy, inflamed by desire of independence, fed a constant stream of troubles for their common master, who held them as several realms, not as one, on different conditions and by various titles.

Henry II. of England, who first united these territories, was a man of conspicuous energy and prudence both in peace and war. He was able to keep together the provinces of his Crown; and even to add the county of Berry and the district of Vexin, and to establish his suzerainty over Brittany. But he never got the upper hand, decisively or for long, over the French King, who watched him like a jealous enemy, and did not fail to use the many opportunities of annoyance and attack which were opened by Henry's dissensions with the Church, with his subjects, and with his own family. He was generally leagued with one or other of the English princes, who led the continental provinces in rebellion against their father, and accustomed them thus to look to France, not England, as their natural suzerain and ally. In this way Louis VII. harassed and kept at bay, though he could not seriously cripple, the power of the House of Plantagenet. His successor, Philip Augustus, achieved more. With his reign the tide of fortune turned to the flow, carrying the Capetian monarchy, which hitherto had only maintained itself in its original bounds, towards the destined limits of aggrandisement.

By marriage with the niece of the childless Count

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of Flanders, and by a successful war against her uncle, Philip obtained the possession or reversion of Artois and Vermandois. The English King, at peace with France for the moment, kept himself benevolently neutral in this dispute, and helped to arrange the terms of settlement. But the quarrel of the two Houses was kept alive by conflicting interests and soon broke out again openly. It was suspended however for a time by the death of Henry and by the third crusade.

Philip entered upon that undertaking less from inclination than in obedience to the common sentiment of Christendom, which demanded imperiously that an effort should be made to stem the sudden flood of Infidel victory, and to restore the kingdom of Jerusalem from its recent ruin. Nor did he wait for its conclusion to resume his attacks upon the great enemy of the French Crown, in which he was assisted by the dissensions which continued to prevail in the family of his rivals. He opposed John Plantagenet to Richard; and after Richard's death, upheld against John the legitimate claim of his nephew Arthur; but finding no prospect of immediate success, and exhausted by the war, he made peace in the year 1200, and cemented it by marrying his eldest son Louis with Blanche, John's niece, daughter of the King of Castile.

His opportunity came two years later, when John, who perhaps more than any other prince indulged his private passions to the detriment of his Crown, enraged the Count of La Marche, his greatest vassal in Poitou, whose betrothed wife he took

for himself; and earned the hatred of the Bretons and the reprobation of all men by the murder of Arthur. This time the fortune of arms was not doubtful. Normandy was overrun and submitted almost willingly; for the attachment of both people and barons to their ancient dynasty was much diminished by long absence of the sovereign in a foreign kingdom, and by the stricter rule and heavy exactions which lately had begun to be introduced. Philip confirmed his conquest by leniency of treatment and by preserving the privileges of the vanquished. The English King, detested by many of his subjects and sunk in long torpors of sloth and sensuality, not only failed to recover his losses, but endured in the following years the defection of other provinces, Maine and Anjou and Touraine and Poitou, which passed into the power of his enemy. He was deprived of his fiefs by a solemn judgment of the peers of France, and reduced to make a truce, under which he abandoned everything north of the Loire, and a great part of Poitou besides.

Philip was left with his dominions doubled in extent and seven years of peace in which to establish and strengthen his authority. By that time he was ready to take the offensive again. The occasion was offered by the policy of the Apostolic See, which divided Western Christendom into two factions. On the one side Pope Innocent III., pursuing his inevitable feud against the Emperor, set up as a rival to Otho of Brunswick the young Frederick of Sicily, heir of the Imperial House of Hohenstaufen. The French King supported this party. On the

other side the Emperor Otho was backed by John of England, who was his uncle. The Pope had his own quarrel with John, springing from ecclesiastical affairs in England; and, affecting to depose him from his kingdom, offered it to Philip, who welcomed the enterprise. It was not undertaken, for the Pope withdrew his sanction when John submitted at the threat; but Philip turned his arms against the Counts of Flanders and Boulogne, who having reason before to complain of his encroachment had revealed themselves in this juncture the allies of his enemies. Their friends did not desert them; a coalition was formed which hoped to destroy the French King and to split his swollen monarchy into fragments. But the fortune of battle was otherwise. The confederated

A.D.      army was beaten at Bouvines. Otho fled  
1214      wounded and broken from the field; Fer-  
rand of Flanders and Reginald of Boulogne  
were taken prisoners. Meanwhile Prince Louis  
drove the King of England shamefully from Poitou;  
Flanders became submissive; and the growing king-  
dom was strengthened and consolidated by the vic-  
torious war.

A year later the intolerable disorders of England  
and the failure of their rebellion led the barons of  
that country to offer its crown to Louis in right of  
his wife. His expedition, at first successful, was  
afterwards defeated and forced to return, as John's  
A.D.      death removed the cause of English discord,  
1216      and the temper of the nation revolted  
against invasion and conquest by a foreign  
prince. Philip had not assisted and barely refrained

from forbidding his son's attempt; whether that from policy he was unwilling to be entangled in an undertaking beyond his strength, and dangerous, perhaps, if it failed, to the security of acquisitions already won, or that he feared the enmity of the Pope, who took John under his protection, forbade him to be attacked, and excommunicated Louis for persisting. But the Princess Blanche, who is said to have urged her husband to accept the offer, was allowed to raise men and money for his succour; in this work she showed herself active and able, and equipped a considerable convoy, which, however, was met and destroyed at sea by an English fleet.

While the King was extending his power in Northern France, Languedoc was afflicted with the most terrible disorder and calamity, which turned, not by design, but by the course of events, to the profit of the monarchy. The evil began by the growth in those parts of the Albigensian heresy. It is difficult and perhaps not necessary to define the exact tenets of the superstition, which indeed took various forms. It appears to have been, in the main, a revival of the Manichean belief which held that the universe was governed by two Powers—one good, one evil. The principles and dogmas of this creed, mixed with heathen philosophy and Eastern mysticism, were repugnant to the settled faith of the Christian world; and its practical results emphasised the difference and increased the hostility of the orthodox. Such error could have taken no root in other parts of Western Europe, where life was rude and simple, speculation confined, and

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religion led men to observance of worship, pious works, and absolute faith in the doctrines of the Church, rather than to subtle questioning and extravagant ideas. But the people of South-eastern France, as has been remarked, were on a different level of civilisation: more rich, luxurious, and leisured, and they ran mad after a teaching which was not only odious but incomprehensible to their northern neighbours. Their intelligence was captivated by its ingenuity; their feeling touched by its mysticism; and the asceticism and purity enjoined on its votaries, though practised by few, attracted the more serious spirits among a population of easy and licentious livers, who had fallen away from primitive belief.

The spread of heresy soon roused notice and alarm in other countries, and especially at Rome; for the Church was both shocked in its convictions and attacked in its interests. The new sect was said to proclaim that Jehovah was Satan, and most of the Old Testament his work; that Moses and John the Baptist were devils. At the same time they pronounced the existing Church to be a creation of the Evil Power; and pointed at the vices of the clergy, who in Languedoc shared the prevailing looseness of manners. Bishops and abbots were driven from their sees and possessions, and the whole order fell into contempt and disrepute. The schism was strongest in the towns; but a great part of the nobility of the province became perverts, and took the occasion to seize ecclesiastical lands. The high magnates, the Count of Toulouse, the Viscount

of Beziers, and the Count of Foix, adhered openly to the heretics, or favoured them secretly.

The Pope thundered against the error, and sent missionaries to reclaim the strayed. They corrected in some degree the disorders of the clergy of the region; but preached for ten years without effect, though reinforced by the burning zeal of Saint Dominic. Their hearers were averse and scornful; while the enthusiasm which always lies hid in the heart of any people, however incredulous, was already possessed by the heretics. The only result of the mission was to embitter and enrage both sides, as the monks upbraided and threatened the sectaries, and were in turn scoffed at and ill-treated. At last Peter of Castelnau, one of the legates, who had denounced Count Raymond of Toulouse by name, was murdered at Saint Gilles by a knight of the Count's. The others fled; and Innocent, angry beyond measure, ordered a crusade to extirpate heresy and to dispossess Raymond. The summons carried with it indulgences and all the benefits which the Church could offer to the servants of the Faith; and was well answered by the barons of France. The King refused to take part, alleging that two great enemies—the Emperor and the King of England—lay in wait against him and required his whole strength. A vast army following the cross invaded Languedoc. The Count of Toulouse was terrified, submitted, and joined in destroying the Viscount of Beziers, his own nephew and ally. The papal Legate offered the territories of Beziers to the Duke of Burgundy, and then to other magnates

who were in the crusade; and when they declined, to Simon of Montfort the elder, who accepted the gift and the task of suppressing schism: the others returned home.

Raymond of Toulouse found himself subjected to conditions of peace too hard to bear; and became in his turn the mark of the crusade, which Simon of Montfort carried on, aided by the levies of the Church and by private adventurers. The war was bloody and devastating and pursued to extirpation with a cruelty beyond the custom of the age. The invaders fought as against infidels instead of fellow-Christians, and showed no mercy in battle or after it. Montfort's military skill and fierce enthusiasm sustained him against the greater numbers of the enemy; who, besides the multitude of his subjects, obtained the help of Gascony and Aragon. For the struggle had changed from a religious to a political one with Montfort's endeavour to establish himself in Languedoc; and neither the King of Aragon nor the King of England wished the Count of Toulouse to be crushed to the profit of France and the Pope.

A.D. But the combined forces were defeated at  
**1213** Muret; and the Councils of Montpellier\* and of the Lateran † declared Raymond deprived of Toulouse and all his possessions west of the Rhone, which were assigned to Montfort and his heirs.

The crusaders had conquered but could not hold Languedoc. After a short time the whole country

\* January, A.D. 1215.

† The fourth of the Lateran, November, A.D. 1215.

rose against them. Montfort was hard pressed in the field, but nevertheless maintained a siege of the city of Toulouse for nine months, when his head was split by a stone from a catapult. His eldest son, Amaury, inherited his claims but not his war-like genius. He was beaten and repulsed everywhere, his garrisons driven out, and the Counts of Toulouse regained their own. Amaury solicited help from the King, and his prayers were supported by the pressing mandate of Pope Honorius.\*

Philip had hitherto declined to meddle in the affairs of Languedoc or actively to assist the crusaders. He had complied, however, with the papal injunction and his own interests so far as to be benevolent to their enterprise. After Muret he had sent his son to the south with an army, which finding no present need of its services returned quickly; and he had accepted the homage of Simon of Montfort for the conquered territories. Now he was less occupied with other dangers, and not unwilling to sustain his vassal and prove his obedience and devotion to the Church. Louis was despatched again and had some successes; but, failing to take Toulouse in face of the obstinate defence of the citizens, he retired, having accomplished the forty days of service which earned the indulgences promised to the crusade. Amaury got no more aid, and lost the whole province with the exception of a few strong places. It seems that the King, advanced in age and failing in health, shrank from a new and arduous task; or perhaps he considered the fruit not

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\* Honorius III., who succeeded Innocent III. in A.D. 1216.

yet ripe. At any rate he refused the cession, which Amaury offered in his straits, of all the territories which the two Councils had bestowed on the House of Montfort.

Philip Augustus died in 1223, leaving an immense treasure and a Crown marvellously increased in strength and reputation over that which he had received. His son Louis, eighth of the name, succeeded him without trouble or opposition, being the first prince of the Capetian House who had not been solemnly crowned and associated in the kingdom during his father's lifetime. He was already in the prime of his years, an approved soldier and zealous churchman, of a bold and upright character, ambitious of power, but inferior to Philip in prudence and politic genius. He was willing to suppress the southern heresy which had sprung into new vigour with the expulsion of the invaders; and accepted Amaury's cession, subject to the Pope's confirmation. But Honorius at this moment had changed his views, and was more anxious to promote the crusade of Palestine which the Emperor Frederick was undertaking. He discouraged therefore any renewal of the attack on Toulouse; and the King, though reluctant, obeyed.

The Pope's exhortations to peace with England were less favourably heard. Louis not only rejected the demand for the restoration of Normandy which Henry III. put forward, alleging a stipulation of the treaty which closed the late unfortunate invasion; but, the existing truce having expired, he

prepared to complete the conquest of Poitou. With a great army, which was joined by many magnates of France, he entered that province, captured the strong town of Rochelle, and continued as far as the river Garonne a march which resembled a triumphal progress rather than a campaign. The Count of La Marche came over to his side, and the whole country yielded almost without resistance, having small affection for the English suzerain, who, distracted by quarrels with his baronage, seemed to have abandoned Aquitaine to its fate. An expedition which crossed in the following year recovered little of what had been lost.

A.D.

1224

Meanwhile the Emperor had deferred his crusade; and the Pope reverted to the affairs of Languedoc. He sent a Legate into France to procure a suspension of hostilities against the English, and to arrange for the destruction of the heretics. A council of French prelates convoked at Bourges refused to be satisfied with the assurances of Raymond of Toulouse, son of the Count whom Montfort had dispossessed. The final decision was referred to the Pope; who through the mouth of the Legate, in an assembly of barons and bishops at Paris, excommunicated Raymond and his adherents, and called on the King to take possession of the fiefs renounced by Amaury of Montfort. The papal mandate, the urgent entreaties of the prelates, who declared that he alone could accomplish the business, and his own inclination, led Louis to consent. The crusade was preached zealously throughout France, and was

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undertaken by a vast multitude of all ranks. The clergy contributed a tenth of its revenues to the war. The King of England was threatened with excommunication if he troubled France; the King of Aragon forbidden, under the same penalty, to assist the Count of Toulouse.

The rendezvous of the crusaders was fixed at Bourges, a month after Easter, 1226. They amounted, it is said, to fifty thousand horse. The King, leaving Queen Blanche at Paris to govern in his absence, led them to Lyons and down the valley of the Rhone, finding no opposition till he came to Avignon. The heretics were strong in that rich and fortified city; and either through hostility or fear passage was denied to the royal army. Louis laid siege with all his forces. The defence was vigorous and prolonged, for the town was well furnished with men and machines of war. The besiegers lost great numbers in assaults and through sorties, and were distressed by the summer heats and the plague which followed, and by failure of food and forage, as the Count of Toulouse had wasted the surrounding country. At the end of forty days Count Theobald of Champagne, declaring that he had fulfilled the period of service to which he was bound by feudal law, withdrew from the camp. His defection was suspected to be arranged with other of the magnates, who saw their forces being exhausted for the aggrandisement of royal power. Nevertheless the King persisted in the siege; and after three months the town was brought to capitulate. It received easy terms: a fine, the delivery

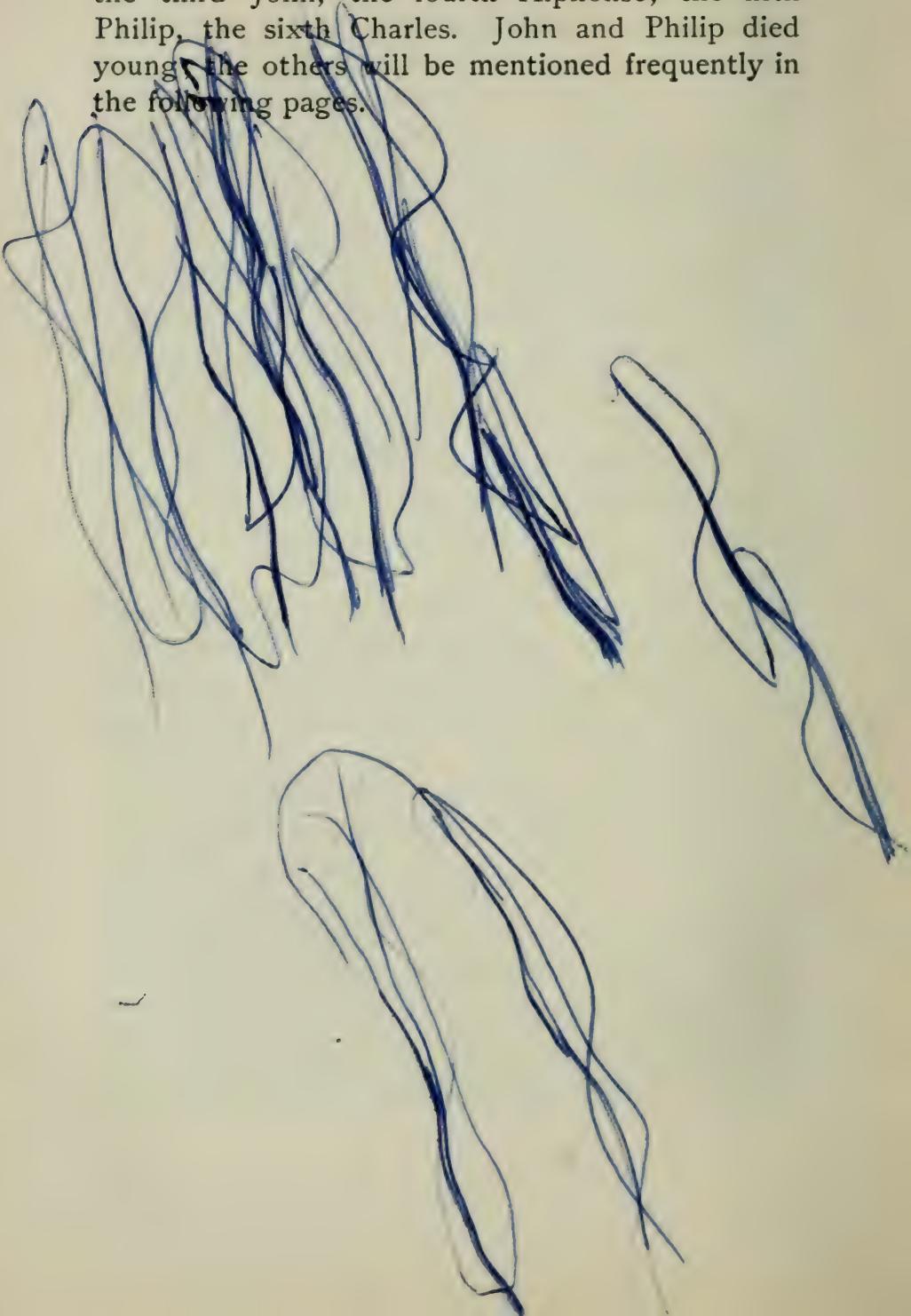
of hostages, the breach of its walls, and filling up of the moat.

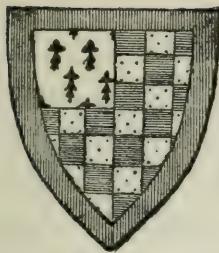
The army, much diminished by its losses and by the return of many of the crusaders, proceeded through Languedoc to within a few miles of Toulouse. There was no resistance anywhere, Count Raymond having gathered his forces within the walls of his capital and left the country unoccupied except by a peaceful population or those who favoured the invader. Louis did not attempt the siege of Toulouse, which he purposed to undertake the next spring, but, leaving his lieutenants behind and garrisons in the strong places, turned to march homewards. At Montpensier in Auvergne he fell sick of dysentery and fever brought on by the unhealthy climate and the hardships of campaigning; after a few days' illness he died on the 8th of November, 1226.

Before his death he called the bishops and barons who were in the army, and requested them to take an oath to be faithful and obedient to his heir, which they did with tears, afterwards confirming their promise by a written deed. He also named the Queen as guardian and regent during the minority.

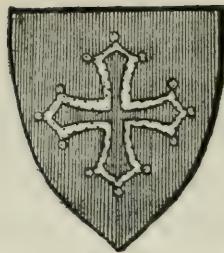
His body was carried back home and buried in the Church of Saint Denis where the Kings of France have their sepulchre. Contemporary writers praise him as a brave and pious prince, generous of disposition and affable in his manners. He left an infant daughter Isabel, and six sons; of whom Louis, the eldest, the subject of this work, was in his thirteenth year, having been born on Saint Mark's day,

the 25th of April, 1214. The second was Robert, the third John, the fourth Alphonso, the fifth Philip, the sixth Charles. John and Philip died young, the others will be mentioned frequently in the following pages.





PETER, COUNT OF BRITANNY



THE COUNT OF TOULOUSE

## CHAPTER II

THE MINORITY; AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST  
THE MAGNATES

1226-1231

QUEEN BLANCHE, coming from Paris with her children to join her husband, was met by Bishop Guerin of Senlis with the news of his death. It is said that she displayed the utmost violence of grief, and would have taken her own life had not the frenzy been restrained by her attendants. The tale is not incredible, for it is agreed that the King and Queen, since their marriage in childhood, had cherished a passionate affection for one another. But there was little time to indulge sorrow if the duties of a mother and a guardian were not to be forgotten. It appeared at once that the crown and fortunes of her son were in danger, from which only promptness and vigour and sagacity in counsel and action could save them.

The magnates of France had found their power depressed, as the royal power was exalted, by the policy of Philip Augustus. They nourished their discontent, and were anxious to take the first

occasion for recovering the ground they had lost and for vindicating their old independence. Signs of imminent trouble had appeared in the late reign : the desertion of the Count of Champagne from the army before Avignon, and the secret league which was said to exist between him, the Count of Brittany, and the townspeople. The storm which Louis VIII. did not live to meet gathered quickly round the throne of his successor, as the magnates saw their opportunity in the prospect of a long minority, a weak and troubled government, and a Regent whom they hated as a foreigner and despised as a woman.

Blanche, however, was a woman of masculine and kingly genius, as her enemies recognised afterwards when they called her the new Semiramis. She had the fierce and haughty temper of the blood of Plantagenet which she shared ; the intolerance of opposition, the ruthless energy, the caution, prudence, and skill in affairs which marked so many princes of that famous race. She had also the support of a considerable party. The prelates, as a rule, were on her side. The Cardinal-Legate Romano was her firm friend ; scandal, in which there appears to have been no truth, asserted that he was her lover. He was of the Frangipani, a noble Roman House, and claimed kinship with the royal family of France. He had been sent into the kingdom, as has been related, to contrive peace with the English and war against the heretics ; and had shown himself deserving the reputation which he bore of wisdom, discretion, and ability. Another priest whose counsels

were valuable to the Queen was Guerin, Bishop of Senlis, Chancellor in the late reign and an old adviser of Philip Augustus, who had done good service at the battle of Bouvines. But the misfortune of his death, which happened in the spring of 1227, soon deprived her of his friendship and assistance.

The magnates expected to find a leader in Philip, Count of Boulogne, son of Philip Augustus by a morganatic marriage. He had been married to the daughter of that Count of Boulogne who was taken prisoner at Bouvines and was still in captivity, and had received the possessions of his father-in-law and other lordships in Normandy. This young prince was of a proud and brutal temper which got him the nickname of Hurepel, that is, Roughskin: he was not, however, without generous emotions or loyalty; and though resenting the regency of another, remained at this juncture faithful to the oath which he had sworn at his brother's death-bed. The Queen encouraged his good disposition by a gift of castles and a pension.

But the chief spirit of the discontented party was Peter, commonly styled the Count of Brittany. He was a cadet of the family of Dreux, a younger branch of Capet; and acquired Brittany, which he now governed as Regent for his son, by a marriage with Alix, half-sister of the unfortunate Arthur. While he fought against the extension of royal authority he encroached unscrupulously upon the rights of his own vassals, and was called Mauclerc because he plagued the clergy. The writers of the

age, who were mostly monks, have given him the worst of characters. They describe him as a hatchet of sedition, full of treasons and stratagems, cruel, faithless, and a pirate. At the same time he was admitted to have an intelligence above the level of his time and to be a brave soldier and skilful commander both on land and sea. His principal ally was Hugh of Lusignan, Count of La Marche, once the lover and now the husband of Isabel, widow of King John of England. He had submitted to Louis VIII. when he overran Poitou, and had made an agreement with him against the English, but was not inclined to become an obedient vassal to France: his wife's ambition rather than his own incited him to take advantage of the disturbances about to arise.

The last injunctions of Louis VIII. had bound his adherents to see that his son was crowned as soon as possible, that he might receive the homage of his great subjects and be fortified by their oaths of allegiance. No time was lost in carrying out his wishes. The Queen wrote letters to the archbishops, bishops, and magnates of the realm, summoning them to assemble at Rheims for the coronation on the first Sunday in Advent. The communes also of the neighbouring region were summoned to attend; and letters to the same effect were sent out by the prelates and barons who had given their promise to the late King. The replies received were not encouraging. Many of the barons declined to come. Some veiled their disaffection under pretext of the grief they professed to feel at the King's death; aiming no doubt at the Queen,



SEAL OF ROBERT, COUNT OF DREUX.



whom her enemies already accused of having conspired with the Count of Champagne to poison him: that prince was well known to entertain a romantic attachment to her person, which gave a handle to the lie. A greater number demanded openly that the prisoners whom the King held should be released, especially Ferrand of Flanders and Reginald of Boulogne; that the lands which the last two Kings had taken unjustly, as they said, should be restored; and that the feudal privileges of the barons, which had been impaired, should be reaffirmed to the full.

These refusals did not make the Queen and her counsellors less anxious to hasten the coronation. She carried the King to Rheims, whither repaired a number of prelates and a few magnates; among them the Counts of Boulogne and of Dreux, the Duke of Burgundy, the Count of Bar, and Enguerrand of Coucy; also the Countess of Flanders, who was in treaty for the release of her husband, and the Countess dowager of Champagne. The Legate was present; and John, King of Jerusalem, with his Patriarch. Theobald of Champagne was prepared to attend and approached within a few miles with his retinue, a part of which entered the town. But he was in much odium from his desertion at Avignon and the slander of poisoning which had been spread against him, and was moreover disliked by the barons, particularly by the Count of Boulogne, on account of the favour which he showed to the commons in his domain, and the liberal and learned studies which he pursued, preferring them

to the usual occupations of feudal nobility. The Queen, therefore, to avoid offence, sent and forbade him to enter Rheims, and ordered the provost to expel those of his following who were already in the place; and the barons added a message that he should not fortify his towns, or a general attack would be made on him. Receiving this discouragement he retired in great anger.

The young King was crowned on the day fixed, the first Sunday in Advent, by the Bishop of Soissons, the See of Rheims being at the time vacant. In his right hand was placed a royal sceptre, the emblem of protection and government; in his left a wand, signifying mercy, with a hand at the top to typify justice. His head was anointed with sacred oil from the vial kept in the abbey of Saint Remy. It was remarked that he had the blue eyes, the fair complexion, and yellow hair which belonged to the House of Charlemagne, from which he descended through his grandmother, Isabel of Hainault. When the coronation was over the prelates and barons swore fealty and did homage both to the King and to the Regent. The Countesses of Flanders and Champagne each claimed the right of bearing the sword of state in the ceremony; the one in right of her husband, the other of her son. To avoid a decision the office was deputed to the Count of Boulogne.

The next day Blanche returned to Paris with the King. In a few weeks she released Ferrand of Flanders from the prison in which he had lain for twelve years, on terms which, though favourable to

the kingdom, were lenient enough to bind the Count to a loyalty which he faithfully preserved. At the same time she set up a further claim on the gratitude of Philip of Boulogne by detaining his father-in-law in captivity, in which he died shortly afterwards. Meanwhile the enemies of the Crown were laying their plans. Even in the last reign Peter of Brittany had been negotiating with the English on his own behalf and that of the Count of La Marche, with the result that Henry III. had agreed to marry his daughter Yolande; to assist his pretensions; to send his brother Richard, who governed Gascony, to help him; and to cross the sea in person when a suitable opportunity occurred. Hugh of La Marche came into the alliance though Blanche made liberal offers; and the Count of Champagne, fresh from the repulse of Rheims, put himself into the hands of the confederates. Their treaties were made before the end of the year; they avowed openly their intention of refusing obedience to the King and began to fortify and provision their castles.

Blanche, acting promptly, gathered at once a considerable army which the Legate joined and the Counts of Boulogne and Dreux, and threatened to fall upon Champagne. Theobald, who had engaged himself in the rebellion from pique, had no stomach for the war and hastened to make overtures of peace which were accepted gladly, and to return to the Queen's presence. Strengthened by his accession, the royal army advanced towards Chinon, ready to turn against Brittany or La Marche or Richard of Cornwall, who having received from England a

reinforcement of Welshmen and a large sum of money had invaded Poitou. A summons was sent to the two Counts to appear before the King in his court of Parliament, or to be declared open traitors and attacked in force. Being thus brought to a point sooner than they expected, they found themselves unprepared to fight, and promised to meet the King at Chinon. That place was reached on the 21st of February, but the rebels neither appeared themselves on the day fixed nor sent their excuses. They received a second summons and again promised to come, and failed again. To preserve the strictest requirement of custom Blanche summoned them a third and last time in the King's name, and at the same time advanced to Loudun. Then, seeing that no further delay could be hoped for, they sent envoys to arrange terms.

The Queen having made a truce with the English returned to Vendôme, whither the Counts repaired on the 16th of March. Policy and necessity alike forbade harsh treatment; they were welcomed back to their allegiance, did homage to the King in the presence of the Legate, and received considerable advantages under a treaty which was cemented by three contracts of marriage: between John, the King's second brother, and Yolande of Brittany; between the Prince Alphonso and the daughter of the Count of La Marche; and between Hugh, the Count's eldest son, and Isabel, the King's sister. All the parties were children at the time, and not one of the marriages was consummated in the event. Meanwhile Peter obtained the enjoyment of Angers

and other towns of Anjou, which province was already marked out as the appanage of Prince John; and promised for his part to make no alliance with England and to give up his daughter to the Count of Boulogne and to his own brothers, Robert of Dreux and Henry, Archbishop of Rheims, to keep her in ward till the Prince should be of marriageable age. Hugh of La Marche got a pension of ten thousand pounds for ten years in satisfaction of his own and his wife's claims; while the King undertook to make no peace with England without his consent.

The English King, hoping to recover a part at least of his former dominions, sent over the Archbishop of York and others early in the year, to aid the counsels of the rebels and to treat with the barons of Normandy, Anjou, and Poitou. But the envoys found the rebellion already composed, and that the Regent, as the English chronicler complains, "had made herself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." When they applied to Peter of Brittany to proceed with the business of his daughter's marriage to their master, he informed them of the agreement just concluded with the King of France, which he refused to break. They then returned, having accomplished nothing; and in July a truce of a year was made between France and England.

The malcontents had been checked by the Queen's vigour but not reconciled. Indignant at the necessity of submission to a woman they fomented their own anger by spreading abroad calumnies against

A.D.  
1227

her, of which hatred made them credulous. The design of open rebellion had scarcely failed and the treaties of Vendôme been concluded, when a plan was concocted of seizing the King's person as he travelled with his mother from Orleans to Paris. The Count of Champagne sent warning, and the Queen hurried her journey; but reaching Montl'héry, learned that the road was already beset. In these straits she sent messages to the chief citizens of Paris and to all the surrounding country. The neighbouring knights gathered to the city to assist the rescue of the young King; the levy of the Parisians was armed; and they marched together, with banners flying, straight towards Montl'héry. The force of the barons, posted in ambush, was afraid to attack so great a multitude; and Louis passed to his capital along a road lined the whole way with shouting crowds, armed and unarmed, crying on God to give the King long life and save him from his enemies. The sight and sound of a devoted people made so deep an impression on his youthful mind, that to the end of his life he was fond of recalling this scene to memory and of relating it to others.

The confederates, baffled in one plot, concerted another before they dispersed. It was agreed that the Count of Brittany should prepare revolt; and that the rest, being called to attend the royal army against him, should furnish so slender a force that the King would certainly be defeated or captured. They began to doubt, as it seemed, of succeeding except by the help of surprise or treachery. The



GREGORY IX.

FROM A PAINTING IN THE BASILICA OF ST. PAUL'S, ROME.



execution of their design, however, was deferred to a more convenient season; and for a while the peace was not openly disturbed, except for the war in Languedoc, where, with varying success, the crusade was still carried on against the Count of Toulouse and his heretic subjects by the neighbouring barons and clergy, without much assistance from other parts of France. But the path of government remained difficult and full of obstacles.

A new Pope, Gregory IX., had succeeded Honorius III. in Peter's seat; and, though friendly to France, he was inclined to listen to a flood of complaints which poured in from the clergy of the kingdom, on the subject of the tithe on their revenues which Honorius had given to Louis VIII. for five years to support his southern crusade. The crusade had dwindled into the little irregular operations of a local war; but the tithe continued to be exacted; nor could the Regent spare so rich a source of supply. The Legate stood by her firmly in compelling the reluctant clerics to pay; "You shall have the money," he said, "even if you have to take the capes of the canons." The Chapters of the dioceses wrote to the Pope; and the Pope, taking their side, wrote to the Legate blaming his conduct and commanding him to revoke the ordinance he had issued for the levy of the tax. But he anticipated the arrival of the papal letters by going to Rome himself, where he justified his action, and obtained a decree that the tithe should be paid in full; which the deputies of the Chapters, who pleaded against him, could only get modified to the extent that the

arrears still due should be estimated at no more than a hundred thousand pounds.

Another difficulty arose with the Church in the case of the Archbishop of Rouen, who claimed the right of cutting wood in the royal forest of Louviers. The extent of the right was disputed; and the King's bailiff seized some of the wood which was being taken to Rouen. The Archbishop, an obstinate man, quickly had the bailiff excommunicated. The Queen, whose spirit was not less inflexible than his, cited the prelate before the royal court on this and other counts. He appeared but refused to plead, alleging that he held none of his domains under the King, who therefore had no jurisdiction over him. As he persisted in this contention his lands were seized; he then laid an interdict on all that the King possessed within the archbishopric and started to go to Rome, but fell ill on the way. The Pope, learning of the matter from his letters, deputed it to the Legate, who on his return in the following year settled the quarrel and got the Archbishop replaced in possession of his lands.

Though much occupied in public business Blanche did not neglect to provide carefully for the education and training of the young King. She had a more than common affection towards him from his infancy; had nourished him at her own breast; and made him the favourite among her children. Being herself extremely devout, according to the Spanish character, and a member of the third, or lay, order of Saint Francis, she bent her son's mind in the same direction, gave him churchmen

for preceptors, and instilled into him a great regard for the observances of religion and the practice of charitable works. She was a fond but not a foolish mother; and Louis was subjected to the strictest discipline. He was attended constantly by a tutor, "to instruct him in learning and good manners," who beat him when it was required. To this severity he owed a knowledge of Latin—an uncommon accomplishment for a layman in that age. The Queen in her conversation impressed upon him forcibly the simple precepts of orthodox faith, the fear and obedience of God, the hatred and horror of heresy and sin. "I had rather," she would tell him, "see you dead at my feet than fallen into mortal sin." The piety of the time was manifested in the building and endowing of abbeys and churches; and in the spring of the year 1228 the Queen and the King founded the great and noble abbey of Royaumont, obeying an injunction of the late sovereign, who had bequeathed his jewels for such a purpose.

Early in the same year the war in Languedoc was kindled into fresh flame. The operations on both sides were conducted with terrible fierceness and barbarity. It is related that the heretics, having taken two thousand common soldiers of the enemy in an ambush, stripped them naked, put out their eyes, cut off noses and ears, and of some the feet or hands, and turned them loose. It should be said, however, that the report of this cruelty rests upon the authority only of a single chronicler. Be the truth as it may, it is certain that in the summer a

regular and concerted invasion was made into the territory of Toulouse. In the army of the crusaders were the Archbishops of Auch and Bordeaux, the Bishop of Toulouse, seeking to reclaim his flock, and many other prelates, barons, and knights of Gascony and the south; the King also sent a strong reinforcement. They remained three months, cutting down, destroying, and burning fruit trees, vines, corn, and homesteads, turning the country into a desert up to the walls of Toulouse. This evil and the expectation of worse reduced the courage of Count Raymond, and led him to snatch at the hopes which were held out of making peace, especially as the English in Gascony, from whom he trusted to receive some aid, disappointed him. He wrote to King Henry: "I went to your brother Richard, but his counsellors are divided and pull different ways, and he gave me no help." Accordingly a truce was made towards the end of the year; and negotiations began under the auspices of the Legate, whom the Pope had sent back to France at the King's especial prayer, giving him full powers to settle the business. The same commission empowered him to arrange a prolongation of the truce with England, which was effected in the month of June, the Count of La Marche being compelled to release the King from his oath not to treat without his consent.

At the end of the year the rebellion agreed on by the malcontents was ripe to burst; and the power of the Regent and the Throne itself stood in danger. In gaining the alliance of Theobald of Champagne,

who from the time of his submission served her with fidelity and zeal, Blanche had lost that of Philip of Boulogne. Theobald, it has been observed, cultivated letters and the arts; was himself a poet of merit; and naturally inclined to the gay and civilised life of the southern Courts, whence his mother came. He disliked the rude habits of the barons of Northern Europe, whose business was war, whose diversion the chase, and who were not yet much infected with the spirit of courtesy and romantic love, the desire for refinement and splendour, which was born in the countries adjacent to the Mediterranean, was at this time spreading abroad, and later possessed the whole of chivalry. His antipathy to the manners of his peers was expressed, it seems, in an avowed contempt which they resented bitterly, and the Count of Boulogne most of all. Philip, moreover, found himself less considered by the Queen than he thought his due; for she had a high sense of her royalty and held the barons in disdain, it was said; nor indeed was it easy to give him a treatment equal to his own opinion of his merits. He listened readily therefore to the offers of the discontented party, and fortified his towns, Calais in particular. They undertook to make him regent and guardian of his nephew in the Queen's place. He is accused even of having designed to seize the crown; but such a purpose was not in his nature, nor is it borne out by the testimony of his subsequent conduct. His supporters certainly had no such plan in their minds, as a party among them was secretly resolved to depose the whole family of Capet and to set up Enguerrand of

Coucy as king. This design was confined to a few of the barons, the most reckless, who saw, doubtless, the advantage which must accrue to their independence by a change in the reigning dynasty; especially as he whom they proposed to substitute, though respectable from age, nobility of birth, the achievements of his House, and its alliance in marriage with kings and princes, was not able to compete with the magnates of France in the extent of his domains or the number of his vassals. It was reported that the foolish, ambitious old man had a crown made for himself, which was the only thing he did to ensure the wearing of it.

Peter of Brittany set the revolt on foot according to the plan concerted at Montl'héry. Before revealing his rebellion he negotiated with the English, and held out such promises of recovering Normandy that Henry agreed to disregard the truce, and to send him a good body of men commanded by his brother Richard. Having got this succour, about the beginning of December he began to lay waste the lands on his borders. Being commanded to appear in the King's court to answer for his conduct, he replied with a frivolous pretext for not coming and with a list of grievances against the Government, and continued to ravage, pushing his inroads still farther. The Queen, in anger, marched to punish him, and the King with her, ordering a levy of the communes, and summoning the barons to assemble their forces to her banner. They came; but with a following of two knights apiece. A fortunate issue seemed to attend the conspiracy,

for, as they had designed, the Queen found herself in face of the enemy with a much inferior force. Happily for her, the Count of Champagne obeyed her summons with the others; but, suspecting or knowing their intention, he raised and brought with him a body of three hundred knights with their full equipage of followers. This reinforcement changed the complexion of affairs; it was now the turn of Peter to retire and shut himself up in his castles. Though it was the depth of winter the Queen advanced her army and laid siege to Belesme, a place strong by nature, well fortified, munitioned, and garrisoned, and believed to be impregnable. The rigour of the cold alone was enough to defeat the besiegers, had not Blanche shown the qualities of a general. She offered to buy wood, and so procured a vast quantity from the surrounding country. Huge fires were kept burning in and around the camp, which saved men and horses from perishing and enabled the siege-works to be pressed forward. The presence of the Queen and her hardihood incited knights and soldiers to emulation; it was twice attempted to carry the fortress by storm without the least success; then battering machines were brought up, which so broke down and crumbled the walls and towers that the garrison, despairing of making a defence any longer, surrendered at discretion. Their lives were spared. At the same time a force was promptly despatched to Haie-Pamel in Normandy, which had just revolted. The rebels in that place were caught unprepared and the seeds of war were crushed out before they spread.

The Queen's rapidity of action astonished and disconcerted her enemies, who had not expected a serious attack till the winter was over. At the beginning of the rebellion the Archbishop of Bordeaux, accompanied by several lords of Gascony, Poitou, and Normandy, had gone to England and approached Henry, who was keeping Christmas at Oxford, with a petition that he would himself come and retake his dominions with their assistance. He received them well but did not fall in with their proposal, being advised by his chief minister, Hubert de Burgh, who was not free from the suspicion of touching French gold, to await a better opportunity. A better never came; and the present was now lost. Richard of Cornwall, who was already in Brittany, had supposed from the language of his allies that the King of France had no army which could make head against them, and that Belesme was beyond danger of capture. He was amazed to learn that Belesme was taken, and that the royal army was advancing in a strength which forbade resistance. Reproaching the Count of Brittany for deluding him into an expedition where nothing could be gathered but defeat and shame, he embarked his men and returned home. Peter, left alone, in order to gain time, pretended submission and a desire to amend his faults; and entered on negotiations which he neither wished nor intended to have any issue. But his promises and the severity of the winter prevented the Queen from pursuing her advantage; she dismissed her forces and returned to Paris.

Shortly after her re-entry a civil difficulty arose.

Her method of dealing with it exemplifies the strictness, not to say severity, with which she governed. The University of Paris was a body of dignity and learning famous through Europe. It numbered the most renowned theologians of the age among its professors and attracted crowds of scholars from many nations. It held special privileges by grant of the last two Kings, and was notoriously jealous in affirming and enforcing them. The scholars were not less vehement than their masters in the cause. Four years before, they had made a riot and sacked the house of the Legate when he sided against the University in a dispute with the Chapter. On the Monday before Lent, which fell this year A.D.  
in the end of February, some scholars, natives  
of Picardy, having gone to the suburb of 1229 Saint Marcel on a party of pleasure, quarrelled with an innkeeper about the price of wine, and, making a disturbance, were beaten and driven away by the neighbours. Next day they returned with a number of their fellows, broke into the inn, staved in the wine-barrels, and fell upon and wounded many inhabitants of the quarter. Complaint was made by the magistrates of Saint Marcel to the Cardinal-Legate and to the Bishop of Paris, in whose jurisdiction the matter lay. Neither prelate loved the University: the Bishop on account of its frequent resistance to his authority; the Legate from his old experience. Instead of judging the case they laid it before the Queen, recommending condign punishment of that refractory and turbulent body. Blanche acting in haste, says the chronicler, on an impulse

of feminine passion, sent the provosts of the city with their archers, bidding them not spare the guilty. The archers going to the suburb fell without inquiry upon the first groups of scholars that they met and broke them up. The citizens joined in the attack; some of the scholars were killed or wounded, while others were thrust into the river and drowned.

The rulers of the University, when they heard of the occurrence, stopped their lectures, and presented themselves before the Queen and the Legate, demanding immediate satisfaction for the violence done and for the infraction of their privileges. As they were not graciously received and their demands were refused, they ordered the scholastic exercises to cease. Most of the professors, and all the most learned, left the city, and were followed by the students, many taking oath that they would not return till full reparation was received. The University was entirely dispersed; groups of its members settled in many parts of France and of Europe, at Rheims, Angers, Orleans, Toulouse, in Spain and England and Italy. Peter of Brittany offered to establish them at Nantes; and Henry III. at Oxford. The exiles took their revenge on Queen Blanche and the Legate by composing indecent Latin lampoons against them both. It was more than two years before the quarrel was settled by the mediation of the Pope, and the University returned to its seat, on an assurance that the King would see that its privileges were respected and its injuries repaired.

The conditions of peace to be granted to Toulouse were under discussion from the beginning of the year between the Legate and the Archbishop of Narbonne and the agents and friends of the Count. The negotiations drew to a head in April, A.D. 1229, when a treaty was concluded at Meaux, a town of Brie, in the dominions of Theobald of Champagne, whose arbitration was used in the affair. By his advice and that of all his friends Raymond threw himself without reserve upon the mercy of King and Church. The terms imposed upon him ran: that the King, considering the humbleness of the Count and hoping that he would continue faithful to him and to the Church, was willing to be gracious to him and to accept his daughter Joan in marriage for one of the Princes, his brothers. That the provinces of Toulouse, of Cahors excepting its capital, of Agen, and half of Albi, should be restored to him, to be enjoyed for his life, but without power of alienation. That after his death Toulouse should pass in the first place to the children of Joan by the King's brother; and, failing these, to the King; the other provinces to go to Joan in event of the Count dying without sons. That the Count should surrender to the King the other half of the province of Albi, and all the territories held or claimed by him on this side of the Rhone, excepting those expressly reserved above. That he should surrender to the Church all his territories and claims on the far side of the Rhone within the Empire. That he should level the walls and fill up the moat of Toulouse and thirty

other named towns. That he should put into the King's hands, as a pledge, for ten years, the castle of Toulouse, after fortifying it at his own expense, and eight other castles. That he should restore to the churches in his country the lands he had taken away, and should pay them fourteen thousand marks in four years. That he should spend four thousand marks in maintaining at Toulouse for ten years two professors of theology, two of law, six of the liberal arts, two of grammar. That after receiving absolution he should take the cross, and within two years' time should go to make war upon the Saracens, and remain for five years. That he should exterminate heresy from his dominions as far as he was able. That he should make war upon his late ally, the Count of Foix, and on others who still refused to submit to the Church; and should keep for himself all places that he captured unless the King wished to have them.

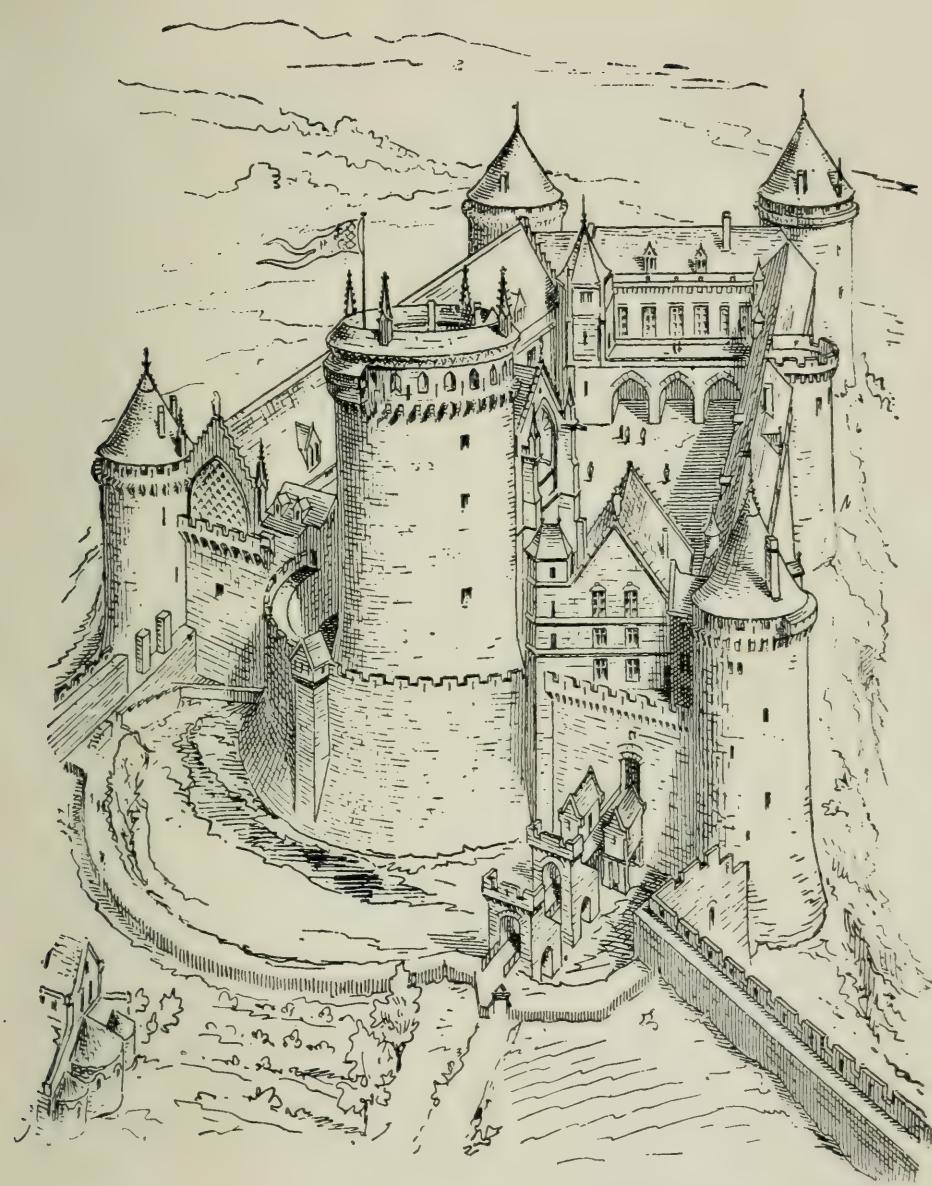
He promised to remain a prisoner in the Louvre until his daughter and five of the castles to be surrendered were placed in the hands of the King's officers; and to give hostages until the wall and moat of Toulouse were destroyed to a length of a thousand yards. The treaty having been signed, Raymond, together with other excommunicated persons, was led to the altar on Good Friday, bare-footed and in his shirt, and was solemnly reconciled to the Church in the presence of Cardinal Romano, Legate in France, and Cardinal Otho, Legate in England. Afterwards he received the cross from the hands of the Legate, and did homage to the

King. An old author has observed that it was touching to see so noble and powerful a count brought into such a posture of humiliation; but that it was a great triumph for the young monarch, on whom God seemed to confer this signal honour in the beginning of his reign, to subdue an enemy who had resisted many mighty adversaries and to impose on him several hard conditions, any one of which might have satisfied a King who had taken him captive on a pitched field of battle.

A royal ordinance was issued for the resettlement of the Church in Languedoc and for the suppression of heresy. The provisions were severe; but the execution was committed to Peter of Colmieu, a cleric distinguished for moderation, charity, and uprightness, who had refused nine bishoprics. He was no friend to and was hated by the Preaching Friars, who were the party in the Church most violent and cruel towards heretics. He succeeded in reconciling the people of Toulouse, and induced them to receive their Bishop and to join against the Count of Foix and other heretics who were still in arms. The Count of Foix soon submitted and made his peace in September, surrendering several strongholds to the King. Meanwhile Count Raymond, having given up his daughter and his castles and obtained some modification in the terms of his treaty, returned to Toulouse, the Legate following close behind. A council assembled there in November to ratify the peace, to pass ordinances for the establishment of the university which Raymond had undertaken to endow, and to frame regulations for dealing with the

heretics. It established against them that system of espionage, denunciation, and punishment, which afterwards fixed itself in a severer form and was known as the Inquisition. That the country was not thoroughly pacified was manifest after the departure of the Legate, who returned to Rome at the end of the year, when the Bishop underwent great vexation and persecution from the citizens, and several persons who had shown most zeal against heresy were assassinated.

The Count of Brittany carried on his pretence of submission until after Easter; then abandoned it, and sent his bands to ravage over the borders. He had arranged that Philip of Boulogne and the barons leagued with him should fall upon Champagne at the same time, so that the King might be deprived of a valuable ally; and that an English expedition should cross into Brittany to help. The confederates, however, were slow to move, and the Queen was swift. She threw an army quickly along the Loire, and captured the strong places of Châteaudun and Chantocéaux, lying on either side of the river about five leagues above Nantes. Peter hastened to protest that he was anxious to make peace; and produced so much effect by the several missions which he sent, that the Queen and King, putting garrisons in the captured places, withdrew the rest of their forces from his country. Meanwhile the barons had done nothing. The King of England had gathered a host of men and munitions of war at Portsmouth before Michaelmas, but found no sufficient number of ships to carry the expedition.



H. Toussaint  
d'après M<sup>e</sup> VIOLET LE DUC

**CASTLE OF COUCY, IN THE TIME OF SAINT LOUIS.**

FROM A DRAWING BY M. VIOLET-LE-DUC.



He attributed the fault to his minister, Hubert de Burgh, whom he publicly with violence accused of having treasonably procured the failure of transport, for a bribe of five thousand marks received from the Queen of France. Before the preparations were made good Peter himself arrived, breathing war, and undertook to hold Brittany as a fief of England. But as autumn drew on, it was resolved, after long discussion, not to trust the chance of storms and a winter campaign, but to defer the invasion till the following spring.

A short time after the outbreak of Brittany had been checked, the confederated magnates attacked the Count of Champagne. The Count of Boulogne, the princes of Dreux, the Duke of Burgundy, Enguerrand of Coucy, and many others invaded his domain from all sides with their troops, pillaging and destroying the country and the towns, as they gathered towards the rendezvous which had been named at Troyes, the capital of the province. Many places were deserted and burned by the Count's own order, lest the stores in them should fall into the enemy's hands; but Troyes, gallantly defended by Simon of Joinville, father of the historian, repulsed their assault. They then encamped a few miles away. Theobald was unable to meet them in the field, being forsaken by many of his own vassals who leagued themselves to the invaders: he implored help from the royal power, which the mutual obligation of fealty bound to assist and defend its faithful lieges. It was the interest no less than the duty of the Regent to listen, since she was well

aware of the designs of the confederates, and of the danger to which she herself would be exposed when they had crushed her chief ally. She issued letters patent commanding the barons to leave Count Theobald in peace; and when these were unheeded, gathered an army and marched with the King into Champagne, encamping close to Troyes, where Theobald and the Duke of Lorraine, his ally, joined her with what muster they could raise.

A fresh royal command was sent to the barons to leave Champagne, and due course of justice offered if they had any complaint against the Count. They replied insolently, that the Queen was defending her husband's murderer; that Champagne belonged to Alix, Queen of Cyprus, Theobald's cousin; and that if the King would retire to a place of safety they would fight out their quarrel with Theobald and his friends. They were answered that if there was to be fighting the King would take his share; and that he would not parley till they retreated beyond the borders. Discomfited by this firmness, they retired from Troyes a short distance towards Burgundy, and the royal forces followed. Meanwhile Count Ferrand of Flanders, a faithful adherent to the Regent since his release from prison, entered with his men the lands of Boulogne, which he pillaged fiercely. The news troubled Philip; who now also began to perceive that his influence was not unquestioned with his party: he was warned, say some, by a message from Blanche of the ambitions of Enguerrand of Coucy. Thereupon, it is narrated, his heart smote him because of

his treason, and he began to hold the language of submission. "You speak ill," he said to his protesting followers; "we shall be perjured and traitors to the King if we trespass further against his command, seeing he is my brother's son, and my liege lord, and I am his liege man." The astonished barons gazed at one another in confusion; then broke into fresh remonstrance and entreaties not to betray the common cause. "God's name! folly left is better than folly kept," was his only answer. He proceeded to write to Blanche that he was unwilling to disobey her and the King; and left the camp. The magnates, thus deserted by their leader, and fearing, says a chronicler, the vengeance of the Queen, "who was good at rewarding according to their merits those who had deserved her hate or love," hastened to make truce with the Count of Champagne and to disperse to their homes. The King and Queen returned to Paris.

Pope Gregory, who had a particular affection for the kingdom of France, was much distressed by the constant wars with which it was afflicted. He wrote to the Bishops of Senlis, Orleans, and Meaux in the end of this year, ordering them to use all endeavours to appease the troubles; to the Archbishop of Lyons to a similar effect; and to the Duke of Burgundy an injunction to remain loyal to the King and to urge other princes to keep the peace. His exhortations bore no immediate fruit. Immediately after Christmas the Count of Bar attacked the Duke of Lorraine and burned a great number of villages; the Duke with his ally,

A.D.

1229

the Count of Champagne, returned the invasion, and burning and destroying, inflicted more damage than he had received. The Count of Champagne, assisted by Ferrand of Flanders, ravaged also the domain of the Count of Saint Paul, in revenge for the part he had taken against him the year before. At the same time a private war was devastating Bourbon and Auvergne.

In January, Peter of Brittany renewed his rebellion and sent a formal message to the King, recapitulating his grievances, renouncing his homage and fealty, and declaring war. He was known to be leagued with the English King, who was suspected also to have an understanding, if not an alliance, with the malcontent barons. In its actions at any rate their party was an accomplice with the enemy; since the quarrel which they still declared and pursued against the Counts of Champagne and Flanders distracted the strength of France, and deprived the King of the service and support of the greater part of his realm.

This effect was not long in appearing. The royal army, entering Anjou, occupied Angers and other places which Peter claimed. But the Count of Boulogne, the Duke of Burgundy, and the rest, as soon as the forty days of feudal service were complete, asserted their right to be discharged from further attendance, and returned home to prepare an invasion of Flanders and Champagne. The Counts of those provinces in their turn hurried back to defend their dominions; and the King, left with none but his own following, turned into the

Limousin, where he received the submission and homage of the nobles of the district, who recognised him as Duke of Guyenne.

Theobald of Champagne, embarrassed by the treachery of part of his vassals, could do no more than garrison a few strong places and set guard over the fords. The troops of the barons ravaged his country without pity, sparing only the houses and lands of those who joined them. They burned to the ground Fismes, Epernay, Vertus, Sézanne, and other towns, and would have reached Provins, where the Count lay, had not the garrisons themselves of the castles turned the whole country into a desert, removing or destroying all stores of food, till risk of starvation forced the invaders back. Ferrand of Flanders on his side took the offensive, and did great damage by raiding the territory of Boulogne. Meanwhile the Regent, being unable to prosecute the war actively, sent her envoys into Brittany to treat with the nobles of that province, who were, many of them, on ill terms with their Count, to foment their grievances, or to buy their adhesion, or at least a promise not to fight for the English. The mission was well supplied from the royal treasury, and drew a considerable party into engagements of support.

At last, in May, the English came. Henry himself led the expedition, landing at Saint Malo. He was received as a friend and sovereign by Count Peter and a part of the Bretons; but those whom the Queen had gained fortified their castles against him. He established his

A.D.  
1230

headquarters at Nantes, where he lay waiting for his troops to assemble. In face of the foreign invasion the Count of Boulogne and his allies were summoned peremptorily to suspend their domestic war and to assist in defending the kingdom. They obeyed so far as to make a truce till September; and though it does not appear that they joined their forces to the King, the Counts of Champagne and Flanders at any rate were set free to help him with their full strength. By the end of May the King and Queen gathered an army, with which they moved on to the southern border of Brittany. On the way they renewed the treaty of Vendôme with the Count of La Marche, and received the adhesion of several barons of Poitou. They advanced to Ancenis, where they summoned the loyal nobles of the province to meet them. At that place a court was held, in which the bishops and barons of the army gave sentence against Count Peter, proclaiming him deposed from his regency on account of repeated treasons. Thereupon the loyal Bretons did homage to the King and entered into a mutual engagement with him against the Count and the English, reserving, however, the rights of the heir of Brittany when he should come of age. A bull of the Pope was obtained to absolve them from the oaths of fealty formerly taken to Peter.

They then besieged and took Châteaudun, which was occupied by an English garrison and not above five leagues from Nantes. Henry did not attempt to relieve the place or to carry out any other military operation. Some knights of Normandy came to him



FIGURE ON TOMB OF PETER MAUCLERC, COUNT  
OF BRITTANY.



with an invitation to proceed thither, assuring him of an easy reconquest of the duchy. The enterprise was declined, by the counsel of Hubert de Burgh, as too dangerous; and the intending rebels got nothing but the confiscation of their lands and castles, which were at once seized by the royal lieutenants.

The plans of the English were laid rather towards Poitou. They had expected the Count of La Marche to come to Nantes; and were disappointed when he forsook them, as they said, and joined the King of France. Nevertheless they had a strong party in those regions, of which the principal persons were Reginald of Pons and Aimery of Rochechouart, relying on whose assistance Henry proposed to march through into Gascony, where his presence was required by the Governor. The Poitevins on their part were no less anxious for his support. Aimery of Rochechouart wrote in July, that without English help he could do nothing should the French attack him. Reginald of Pons also begged urgently for aid, writing that the Regent had declared in the presence of several persons that she would strip him if the King kept his own. Accordingly Henry, taking advantage of the retirement of the French army into Anjou, entered Poitou, and thence his own province of Gascony. He gained no success beyond the capture of Mirabeau on his return; and brought back his army to Nantes, where it lay in inglorious ease and debauch, doing nothing, says the chronicler, but spending an inestimable amount of money. In October he returned to England. The reasons are given in a letter written by Henry, at

the end of September, to Geoffrey of Lusignan. He says that he is sick; that the climate of Poitou has increased his malady; that his brother Richard also is sick; that he wishes to gather more men and money for a future campaign; that he is leaving the Duke of Brittany, the Earl of Chester, and the Earl Marshal to carry on the war meanwhile. It was a wreck of the English army that returned. The sickness that had attacked Henry carried off many of his followers. Their diseases were aggravated by the great heat of summer, by their dissolute manner of living, and intemperance in food and drink. Their horses were dead, their money spent, and their stores consumed. The Earl of Chester and the Earl Marshal, who remained with five hundred knights and a thousand men-at-arms, ravaged the borders of Anjou and Normandy, then retired into Brittany for the winter.

The march of the English into Gascony, and their inactivity afterwards, allowed a breathing time which the Queen spent to good purpose in composing the feuds of the magnates and turning their truce into a

A.D.      stable peace. The treaty was made at Compiègne in September. It was stipulated by  
1230      the barons that Theobald of Champagne should expiate the faults alleged against him and remove his presence, the cause of so much discord, by undertaking a crusade with a hundred knights to make war on the Infidels in Palestine. The differences of the Counts of Boulogne and Flanders, of the Count of Bar and the Duke of Lorraine, and of the other parties to the late quarrels were also settled. A stream of gold from the royal coffers

smoothed the difficulties of negotiation. The Count of Boulogne in particular received eight thousand pounds to compensate the damage done to his lands. The King and his mother swore on the Gospels that they would respect the privileges of all, and would judge all within the kingdom according to their due and rightful customs.

Peace being made, the King held a great assembly in December at Melun, where a strict ordinance was passed against the Jews and their usury. The swift and spreading growth of that evil frequently required correction, which the rulers of the age were rarely unwilling to take in hand. The ordinance was set forth to be enacted by the King, according to the advice of his barons, for the good of the realm, and the safety of his own and his father's soul; it fixed a term for payment of existing debts without usurious interest, and forbade borrowing from the Jews at all in the future. The Counts of Boulogne, Champagne, La Marche, Bar, and Saint Paul, the Duke of Burgundy, Enguerrand of Coucy, and many besides, set their seals to the instrument, and swore to do all in their power to carry it out and to enforce observance on others; in spite of which, usury and the Jews continued to flourish.

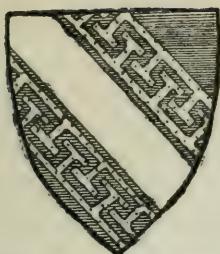
Other troubles were appeased for the present; but Count Peter with the English garrison remained. There was no fresh invasion; and war, which had slept through the winter, was not resumed till the summer of the next year, when the royal army marched into Brittany. It suffered some partial reverses and had little fortune in

A.D.

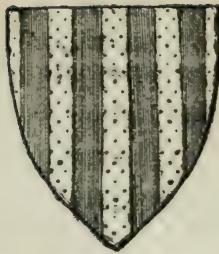
1231

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the campaign; for the country was then, as always, difficult to conquer. On the other hand, the strongest barons of the lower province held for the King; and the English had no interest to continue a defensive struggle, if terms could be obtained. The Pope was exhorting both sides to peace, having ordered the Archbishop of Sens in France and the Bishop of Winchester in England to work to that end. A truce was made in July for three years, between the Count of Brittany and the Earl of Chester for the English on one part, and the Count of Boulogne and the Archbishop of Rheims for the French on the other. The Count of La Marche was also a party to the agreement. Peter was left in possession of Brittany, but bound not to enter the territories of the King or of the Count of La Marche during the time of truce. In August he accompanied the Earl of Chester to England, where he was well received and given a pension of five thousand marks.



THE COUNT OF CHAMPAGNE



THE COUNT OF PROVENCE

## CHAPTER III

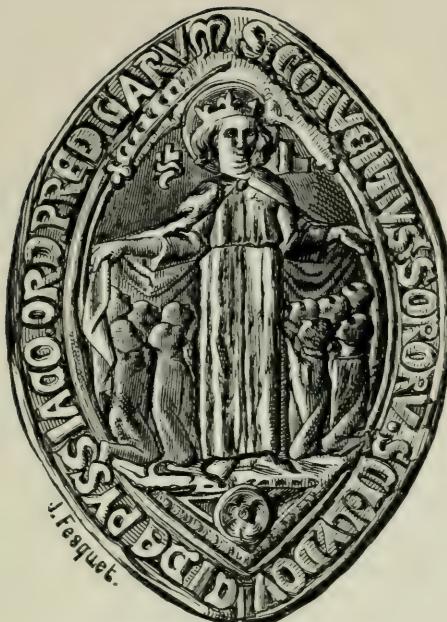
### THE PERIOD OF PEACE

1231-1236

A PERIOD of repose followed, most grateful to France, harassed and desolated in all its provinces by continual warfare since the King's accession. Up to this time Queen Blanche had prevented all the designs of her numerous ill-wishers, had established herself firmly in the regency, and maintained if not strengthened the authority of the Crown. The rivals and opponents of royal power were divided, checked, or conciliated, though still their arms remained formidable, and their hostility was asleep, not dead. The settlement of Toulouse, however, and the repulse of the English were definite gains; as also was the vigour acquired to the monarchy by constant rallying and use of its forces; and the prestige which it earned by a course of successful resistance. The tide, if not turned in the King's favour, seemed no longer to be rising against him; and the quiet which now ensued, to be a respite granted for the repair and refreshment of his powers, rather than a momentary withdrawal

of his enemies in order to advance again with double violence. But although war ceased, a crop of less urgent troubles sprang up, as was to be expected from the late disorders, which had engaged so much attention and energy that ordinary matters went begging, and from the seeds and remnants of enmity and opposition which still infected the minds of many important people.

The great ecclesiastical persons of the realm leaned, as a rule, to the side of the Crown while it struggled to maintain itself against the assaults of the magnates. They were inclined that way both by sympathy and interest. Being religious by profession, and often men of piety and learning, they were sensible to the blessings of peace, order, and equal justice. Being Churchmen, they remembered that the House of Capet was the hereditary friend and supporter of the Church. And they did not, like the prelates of the Empire, stand so high in revenue and dominion and the number of their subjects, that they could deal with the secular princes of France on an equal footing of temporal power, and be sure of sharing all the spoils of authority stripped from the King. Rather it was to be expected that, if once the monarchy were reduced to a name and a shadow, the great barons would apply themselves, without any check, to bring down the pretensions of the prelates and encroach upon their possessions. But as soon as the bond of common danger was slackened, the conflict, usual throughout Christendom, between the claims of Church and of State began to be active.



SEAL OF THE MONASTERY OF SAINT  
LOUIS OF POISSY.



SIGNET RING OF SAINT LOUIS.



GOLD FLORIN OF SAINT LOUIS.



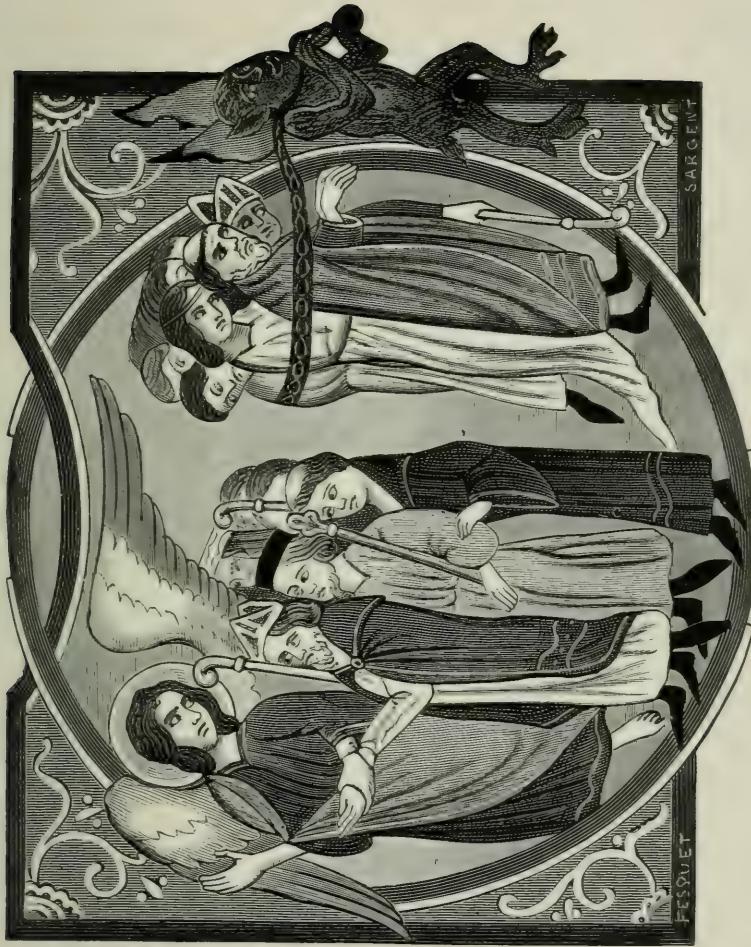
The Regent was not of a temper to let the authority which she had upheld against the fierce attack of arms be whittled away by spiritual weapons. Her difference with Theobald, Archbishop of Rouen, has been related above. He died soon after; and she found no less cause to complain of the conduct of Maurice his successor. This prelate is named as a devout and upright man, charitable to the poor and ascetic in life—the more tenacious for his virtues of the rights he arrogated to himself and his order. The dispute first arose over the election of an abbess in his diocese. The Archbishop took the matter with a high hand, and excommunicated all the nuns of the convent who had submitted themselves to the royal decision. He was summoned to answer before the King on this and on other pleas; and refused to appear, saying he had no judge but God and the Pope, in matters spiritual and temporal alike. The claim to be exempt from feudal law did not pass. The lands, houses, and possessions of his see, which were held as fiefs from the King, were seized by royal officers. Unable to resist and unwilling to submit he betook himself to the last arguments of the Church. First he ordered his clergy to remove the images of the Virgin from all the churches, so that the people could no longer pray before them; then he did the same by the images of Christ. As the Queen did not yield, he laid an interdict ~~on~~ the royal domains in his diocese, forbidding the celebration of mass in any church or monastery therein, and the giving of Christian

A.D.

1233

burial. Finally he extended the interdict to the whole diocese, prohibiting all sacraments except baptism and extreme unction. But these measures, which deprived a province of nearly all the consolations of religion, were fruitless to coerce the Regent. The interdict lay for a year, till a settlement of the quarrel was obtained by the personal mediation of the Pope.

The affair of Beauvais is another example. That town was under the jurisdiction of its bishop, but certain rights of appeal and supervision were particularly reserved to the King. The Bishop was Milo, of the House of Chastillon, Counts of Saint Paul. Belonging by birth to the party of the magnates, he had joined in the early opposition to the Queen and marked himself by the virulence of his tongue. In an assembly of lords and bishops, where she was present, he had called her adulteress, and accused in the grossest terms her friendship with the Cardinal-Legate. This was one of the common slanders on which the barons nourished their enmity, but it could not bear the light; the speaker had been put to shame by the Queen's indignant reply and condemned even by his friends. A good woman is slow to forgive such an offence; and it may be supposed that Blanche was not inclined to be lenient to the Bishop of Beauvais when he crossed her path. Milo was a spendthrift and a man of blood. Overwhelmed with debts, **A.D. 1233** he had gone to Italy in 1230, to recoup himself by mercenary war; but, returning, he fell into an ambush, and lost the fruit of his cam-



THE LAST JUDGMENT.

MINIATURE FROM THE PSALTER OF SAINT LOUIS.



paigns. He came back to find Beauvais torn by faction, the richer trades being at feud with the rest of the citizens. To settle the quarrel the King nominated a mayor from outside, who was accepted by the rich party. But the others raised a riot, drove the mayor and his principal supporters into a house, set fire to it, killed twenty, wounded many others, and dragged the mayor through the streets with insults and beating.

The King and Queen were at Compiègne, which is not far from Beauvais; the Bishop was at his house outside the town. He went thither at once unattended, a proceeding which gave strong colour to the suspicion that he had himself instigated and supported the rioters. His behaviour strengthened this view. The leaders of the mob received him with open arms; he bade them throw themselves on his mercy for what had taken place; but did not attempt to arrest them, or to stop the flight which they presently took, having received a hint to make themselves safe. Meanwhile the King and Queen had heard the news and were advancing with their escort and a hasty levy of men from the neighbourhood. A message of their approach came to Beauvais in the night; and at dawn they reached the Bishop's house. Milo sent a message, then came himself, begging the King not to enter Beauvais but to leave the matter to him, and promising to punish the guilty. The only reply he got was that the King would come into the town and do such justice as he saw fit. The next day the royal party entered. An inquiry was held into the disturbance, a number

of the rioters were seized, the houses of the leaders demolished, and themselves sentenced to banishment, prison, or heavy fines. The Bishop protested all the time that these proceedings infringed his rights; and was answered that he might carry his complaint to the royal court, where he would have a fair hearing before his peers.

Feudal custom bound the Bishop to defray the King's expenses whenever he came to Beauvais; and they were demanded accordingly. This right at any rate was clear; but Milo, whose feelings were sore and his purse empty, refused to pay, pretending that he desired to consult his Chapter. His goods were seized at once, and a guard was left in the town to occupy his palace and receive his revenues. The Archbishop of Rheims and the bishops of the province took up the cause of their colleague, as one in which their common claims and privileges were involved. Their conduct in the matter was governed by party zeal more than by considerations of justice; in hotly supporting a bad case they ran where they could not stand, and neither carried their particular end nor strengthened the position of their order. They were partly led away by the Archbishop, who being a Dreux and brother to Peter of Brittany saw an opportunity to embarrass the King's government. He called a provincial synod which sent deputies to demand Milo's reinstatement in his fiefs. This was refused on the ground that the whole affair related to the Bishop's temporal rights, in respect of which he was subject, like any other baron, to the feudal court

before which the King invited him to appear. The prelates would not be satisfied, and began to interdict their dioceses. But the cathedral Chapters, which had not been consulted, refused to obey the interdicts and appealed to Rome, in which course they were encouraged by royal letters. The Pope was obliged to Milo by old services rendered in his Italian wars and wrote to the King and Queen in his favour. But he did not approve the hasty, unreasonable behaviour of the Bishops, and the interdict was ordered to be removed. This was done at a second provincial council, where most of the prelates avowed their error; while Milo, in fits of rage, covered them with violent abuse. He started for Rome soon after to plead his own cause, but died on the way of a sudden sickness and was buried at Assisi.

It may be supposed that the politic brains of Count Peter of Brittany did not rest from contriving mischief through the period of truce. The Countess of Champagne died in July, 1231; and the scheme of a new combination was quickly built up on this opportunity. Theobald was to marry Yolande, Peter's daughter, and be reconciled to all his old enemies. It was pointed out to him that his cousin Alix, Queen of Cyprus, daughter of his father's elder brother, had certain claims to the possession of Champagne which had never been examined thoroughly; that, if she were invited, she might come to France to press her cause, and might even win it, if well supported; that the danger could be averted by a close alliance with the Houses of

Brittany and Dreux; that the Count of Boulogne, too, was ready to favour the marriage.

Such arguments prevailed: the matter was arranged; the day and the place fixed; and Theobald was at Château-Thierry, on his way to a neighbouring abbey, whither the bride had been carried already by the barons her kinsfolk. But Geoffrey de la Chapelle met him with a message from the King: " My lord Count of Champagne, the King has heard that you have agreed with Count Peter of Brittany to marry his daughter. He bids you not do this, unless you wish to lose all that you have in France. For you know that the Count of Brittany has done the King more wrong than any man alive." These plain words taught Theobald that he must choose his side, and that he could not gain the friendship of the barons without losing that of the Queen. He therefore returned home, leaving Yolande's kinsmen to nurse their anger and disappointment. The projected marriage had seriously alarmed the Queen; and she procured a papal bull expressly forbidding it as incestuous on the ground of close relationship between the parties, they being third cousins. But before long Theobald A.D. was safely married to Margaret, daughter 1232 of Archambaud, lord of Bourbon, who was constable for the King in Auvergne.

The young King grew up during these years to manhood and the rule of his realm. His mother was his only counsellor, and now and for some time longer kept the reins in her own hands. But he was her constant companion, both in the expeditions of

the earlier wars, and in the progresses through the country which occupied much of her time while peace lasted. He could have had no better teacher in the arts of policy and government, and none more assiduous in the lessons of piety. And he was an apt pupil. His character so much resembled hers, that it never rebelled against the early mould which was impressed upon it, or grew away with advancing years from the beliefs and feelings which had governed his youth. Such divergence is the common lot; and where the seeds of it exist, there is ordinarily little hope that filial love and veneration will check their growth. But Louis was not put to the trial: he continued to see eye to eye with his mother, and it is not recorded that to the end of her life they had a serious disagreement.

Together, therefore, they were constantly moving through the kingdom, or rather through those parts of it which depended directly on the Crown, setting matters to rights and displaying and consolidating the royal authority. They paid many visits to Poissy, the King's birthplace, to which he was greatly attached. Much time also was passed at the abbey of Royaumont, then in course of building, where Louis often laboured on the masonry with his own hands. It was his general practice to distribute alms to the poor at the places where he stayed; not wastefully, but as a duty expressly enjoined by Scripture. He was noted to be courteous and gentle in demeanour, of a patient temper, and to abstain from oaths. He was moderate and regular in his manner of living and observed assiduously

the fasts and worship of the Church. The Queen was better pleased with the society of men of religion, learning, or experience in affairs, than with that of courtiers; and her son mixed much in the same company. He was not averse to the chase or any other honest diversion; nor was he yet ascetic as he afterwards became. Some chroniclers, eager to exalt his saintly credit, have attributed to this period of his youth the renunciation of the pomps and vanities of the world, and those austere, self-imposed penances, which in fact he practised after his return from Palestine. But the accounts of his household expenses remain to confute the pious fiction. They show sums disbursed, not only in charity and good works, but on such matters as furnished the ornament and amusement of life in those times — minstrels and musicians; lions and porcupines and other animals of a menagerie; falcons and falconers; dogs and huntsmen and horses. Money was spent on feasts also, and on gold and silver plate; on robes of purple and scarlet and on silks and furs. But it may be observed that, in later years at any rate, the King's personal needs seem to have been supplied at less cost than those of his younger brothers.

Louis being of marriageable age, it was thought expedient for his own good and that of the kingdom that he should take a wife. A suitable match was found in Margaret, eldest daughter of Raymond Bérenger, Count of Provence. Her father, a younger stem of the Kings of Aragon, was a valiant soldier in the continual wars of the South, and a wise prince;

but his power and wealth were not equal to his birth or merits. Her mother was Beatrix of the House of Savoy, a woman of great sagacity and understanding and of a high ambition, which was fully gratified by the marriage of her daughters. They had been brought up to be queens; and all fulfilled their destiny.

Margaret was as noble as any lady between the seas, and as beautiful, if the poets can be trusted. Her only dowry was ten thousand marks, most of which was never paid. But she was well endowed by nature and education; for her father had trained her in religion, and her mother in prudence. She was simple in dress and of a remarkable generosity. When the marriage had been arranged, she was fetched from Provence by a magnificent embassy headed by the Archbishop of Sens. William, Bishop of Valence, one out of many uncles, accompanied her. The King and his mother met her at Sens, with a numerous gathering of lords and ladies. They were married there on the Saturday before Ascension, in the year 1234; and on Sunday the Queen was crowned and anointed in the cathedral of Saint Stephen. Then followed a feast of great expense. The King made new knights and distributed alms and gifts. The bridal party reached Paris in ten days, and were received with tourneys, festivities, and rejoicings in a city celebrated even then for gaiety.

It is related that Blanche, having got her son married, grew jealous of the close affection which sprang up between him and his wife. Joinville says

in his chronicle that this weakness so possessed her that she could not bear to see them much together; and became particularly fond of staying at Pontoise, because there she occupied a chamber between the King and the Queen, who lay on different floors. To escape her notice they used to meet on a private staircase, and when the ushers saw the Queen-mother going to visit the King, they beat on the door with their rods, so that he might hear and run back to his apartments before she came; and the same when she went to visit the Queen. Once too, after childbirth, Margaret was lying in danger of death, it was thought, and Louis was with her, when Queen Blanche came and taking him by the hand said, "Come away; you have nothing to do here." The Queen cried out, "Alas! you will let me see my lord neither dead nor alive," and fell into a faint. The King ran back, thinking she was dead, and they had great pains to bring her to. Bystanders at a sick-bed are not always convenient, and it may be that the chronicler in narrating this incident does injustice to Blanche; but the jealousy between the two Queens is not doubtful.

The truce with England expired the same year on the Nativity of Saint John; and that stiff-necked rebel, the Count of Brittany, prepared to renew the struggle. Already, at the time of the King's marriage, before the truce ended, he was ravaging the lands of Breton barons of the royal party; and the King of England despatched sixty knights and two thousand Welshmen to help. The Regent, on her side, was not idle, but

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sent reinforcements to the garrisons of her friends in Brittany, and a summons to all the nobles of middle France and Normandy and to Flanders and Champagne, to the bishops also and the towns, to bring their levies to a rendezvous for the coming war. One army was gathered at Niort in Poitou, another at Mans in Maine; and great requisitions were made for transport and supplies. It seemed that all the growing strength and renewed vigour of the monarchy was to be applied to crush inveterate rebellion in its native seat. As soon as the truce expired the King entered Brittany with his forces. There was no question of meeting him on a pitched field; it was a war of skirmish and siege, in which the defenders did not fail to reap some advantage. But as the invaders divided into three columns and made regular advances, subduing the country as they went, ultimate conquest could only be delayed, not avoided. Peter was thrown on his own resources; no more succours came from England; the Count of La Marche did not stir; his old confederates were dead, or unready; or reconciled, or afraid to move. He asked for an armistice in August, that he might go to England to see if his ally would come over to help him; failing that, he promised to deliver Brittany and all his castles to the King. The armistice was granted to run till November. The Regent had been in negotiation with England since the previous year; and had good reason, perhaps, to expect Peter's mission to be fruitless. But he was obliged to give hostages and three strong places as security for his word, which made its fulfilment

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safer. He crossed the Channel and got a cold and discouraging reception. The English King's experience of campaigns in Brittany had not been such as to tempt him to further efforts; and at the moment he was not disposed to foreign adventures, especially with an expensive and unprofitable ally, already three parts conquered. His final answer was that the Count must shift for himself; that not all the treasures of England would suffice to defend Brittany.

Peter returned indignant, to stomach the inevitable submission as best he could. His mind was soon made up to the unpalatable fare; he even forced an appetite, and not only swallowed the mess but licked the platter. He came to Paris with a halter round his neck, bearing himself as a condemned traitor, and in the most abject form of humiliation surrendered himself and the duchy, with its towns and men and castles, into the King's hand. But, having yielded, reasons of prudence forbade that he should be pressed too hard. For Brittany was less fitted than any other province to be welded into the inner frame of the kingdom; if the King held it he must hold it by the sword. And the destruction of Peter, unprofitable by itself, would outrage the feelings and excite the alarm of other magnates whose ally he had been and whose peer and kinsman he was. He was allowed, therefore, to keep Brittany as Regent for his son, as before; but gave up the places in Anjou and Maine which he had received under former treaties. He engaged not to agree with the King's enemies; and

to be governed entirely by his decision in the settlement which he should make with the Count of La Marche and with the Breton barons. He surrendered three strongholds for a term of years, and promised to go on a crusade as soon as his regency was discharged. Having thus renewed his allegiance to France he sent a message renouncing that of England; whereupon his earldom of Richmond was confiscated. In revenge he equipped vessels to plunder the English merchants; a proceeding which gave great annoyance to that nation, who called him no longer a noble Count but a villainous pirate.

Such was the end of Peter's career of active rebellion. In the beginning of this year Philip of Boulogne had died. He was said to have been poisoned by the Count of Champagne; with no other proof, it seems, than that they were enemies. His widow and child with their possessions passed into royal ward. Count Robert of Dreux and the Archbishop of Lyons died about the same time. The decease of all three was very advantageous to Theobald, inasmuch as they hated him, and had been among the principal movers in sending for the Queen of Cyprus, who was now arrived in France to push her claims. A few months later died Sancho, King of Navarre: Theobald was his sister's son and heir to that little crown, which he went to assume in May, leaving Champagne in the King's care. His chief remaining enemy, the Duke of Burgundy, threatened an attack; but in face of a royal injunction thought better of it, and gave securities for good behaviour. The Queen of

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Cyprus, having lost those on whose support she had most reckoned and having little reason to expect favour from either King or Pope, the two judges on whom her suit must depend, thought it wise to make a compromise with her cousin. This was arranged in the autumn by the King's mediation. Alix renounced her pretensions to Champagne and its dependencies, and was assigned in exchange an annual rent of two thousand pounds, and in addition forty thousand pounds down. To raise the money Theobald sold to the King for the same amount the suzerainty over the counties of Blois, Chartres, and Sancerre, and the viscounty of Châteaudun. The transaction appeared very profitable to the Crown; and was, no doubt, an essential part of the settlement with Alix, rather than a necessary expedient; especially as the treasury of Navarre was reputed to contain riches far exceeding the required sum. A third of the dominions of Champagne thus passed to the King as direct fiefs, with all rights of homage, wardship, and reversion; a considerable acquisition, and deserving comparison with those of the two former reigns.

The monarchy was beginning to ride high above its troubles. Much had been done by arms; but more by patience. The young King had seen too much war from his childhood not to appreciate highly the blessings of peace. The horrid ravages which in that age were the inseparable incidents, and indeed the chief part, of military operations, had been almost continually before his eyes: the sack of towns and castles; the burning of farms;

the plunder of private goods; the destruction of crops and fruit trees; the universal devastation, which caused a chronicler to cry out that it seemed as if Satan had been let loose to exercise his malice on the realm. The repetition of such scenes could not but impress on a mind naturally beneficent the evils of internecine strife among Christian men. In war of this kind there was little of the glamour of military success which human nature, especially among the French, finds so powerfully seductive. No applause of crowded cities lifted the victor, returning from distant fields, almost to the threshold of divinity. Battle was the business of daily life: not a sport, as afterwards it became; or a rare and heroic duty, as now. It lay at each man's door; each man took his share, finding just so much pleasure as a workman has in his work, and mostly regarding the issue of gain and loss more than the manner of achievement. The successful soldier was reckoned and valued as we value a man skilful or fortunate in his affairs, and no more. It was not in civil or in European war that glory was to be gained, but on Eastern fields, against the enemies of God.

This way of feeling, which was the natural outcome of the circumstances of the early Middle Ages, was fostered and nourished by the Church. Pope Gregory IX. was constantly exhorting the King and magnates of France and the King of England, by letters and by delegated prelates, and urging upon them the reconciliation of their quarrels, both as a Christian duty, and in order to allow some great

effort to be made for the restoration of the fallen cause in Palestine. An earnest appeal to Louis is dated November, 1234.

"How great," the Pope writes, "is the disgrace of Christendom! How great the scandal to us all! Who is so hard of heart and so foward of spirit as not to weep and cry aloud, when he hears in these days the lamentation of the prophet renewed—'God, the heathen have come into Thine inheritance; they have despised Thy holy temple'? Did not your father, of glorious memory, end his days in defending the Catholic Faith? We beg and charge and straitly exhort, and enjoin you for the forgiveness of your sins, and adjure you by the Father and Son and Holy Ghost, and by the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ, to gird yourself up well and manfully to avenge the injuries of our Lord, so that by you or yours help may be given with a great heart to His holy land. That this may not be hindered, make peace in your kingdom, most Christian King, and peace with England."

It has been mentioned already that in order to assist and complete the purging out of long-seated heresy an Inquisition was set up at Toulouse. This institution was in the hands of the Jacobin friars, whose ardent and irregular zeal made them odious to the inhabitants, and troublesome even to the prelates who received successively from the Pope the charge of re-establishing the Church in those parts. It was not to be expected that Count Raymond or the greater part of his subjects would aid that work with any enthusiasm; and endless complaints were

carried to Rome of his slackness and bad faith in carrying out the terms he had accepted at Meaux. On his side he had much to say of the severity of the Inquisitors; and something of their doubtful honesty. It was alleged that the infant terrors of the tribunal were used to condemn the innocent on a private grudge, and even to extort money. The Pope, as was natural, inclined to listen to the ecclesiastics; but the King's intercession was frequently used in behalf of the Count. He was accused at Rome of vexing and hindering the Church in Languedoc through his officers, and of compelling aggrieved clergy to plead their case before the royal courts instead of their own. It is certain that his mediation greatly softened the Pope's rigour towards Raymond, and even procured the restoration of some part of the territories which had been declared forfeit to the Church.

But the quarrel of the people of Toulouse with the Inquisitors was not abated. It went from one violence to another, till, in 1235, the consuls of the town, supported by the Count, forbade anyone to speak to the friars, or to give them food or water or alms, and at last expelled them by force. The Pope wrote angrily, threatening punishment; but the King interceded again, and the honours rested with Raymond, who still delayed to start on his pilgrimage and did not even pay the wages of the professors whom the treaty bound him to support. His contumacy brought him no harm in the end; for the papal policy was unwilling to offend the King by insistence; and, besides, the clerical cause

was in bad odour through France at this time owing to recrudescence of the strife about jurisdiction. Accordingly the restoration of the Inquisition was evaded, except in a modified form; and then its powers were suspended from operation. After three years and much negotiation, Raymond was released in part from his vow of crusade, and obtained formal absolution for all his offences.

The claims of the clergy to be treated like a privileged caste were rejected by the magnates no less than by the royal government. The main quarrel rose from their contention to refer all cases in which they were concerned to the sole decision of ecclesiastical courts, even when the case was civil and they were concerned not as priests but as feoffees of land. It was aggravated by their habit of launching interdict and excommunication against all with whom they had any dispute on matters of property, fit to be settled by civil law. This abuse of the spiritual armoury in pursuit of openly temporal ends was naturally shocking to laymen; the more so as it put them in a position of immediate and constant inferiority, whenever their interests ran counter to those of a cleric. A council of magnates and barons met on this subject at Saint Denis in the autumn of 1235, the King being present. The Duke of Burgundy was there, and the Counts of Brittany, La Marche, Ponthieu, and Saint Paul; the Lords Archambaud of Bourbon and Bouchard of Montmorency, and many others. They addressed a general remonstrance to the Pope on the conduct of the prelates, especially of the Archbishop of Rheims and

his suffragans, who still sustained Godfrey, the new Bishop of Beauvais, in the quarrel bequeathed by his predecessor. The Archbishop of Tours also, they complained, had forbidden his abbots and priors to answer before their feudal suzerains in matters concerning their fiefs; and the clergy everywhere were setting up new claims to the prejudice of King and barons. They begged the Pope to confirm them in the rights which they had always enjoyed, as they on their side were willing that the Church should preserve its ancient privileges; and declared that if the present disorder continued, they and the King would take measures to end it. The protest was followed by a decree to which all agreed, to the effect that their vassals should not be obliged to plead before ecclesiastical courts on civil matters; that if they were excommunicated for refusing, the goods and lands of the clergy should be seized till they took off the excommunication; that ecclesiastical persons should be obliged to plead before lay tribunals in respect of their fiefs, but not in respect of their persons.

These demands, though not immoderate, provoked the Pope, who wrote in a bitter strain to Louis, to the King of Navarre, and to the barons, complaining of the decree, urging them to revoke it, and bringing to their notice the general excommunication pronounced by Pope Honorius III. against those who made any decree adverse to the liberties of the Church. Neither his prayers nor his threats were effective. It is true that the clerics continued to assert their claims; but the seizure of

goods, which was relentlessly enforced, proved more than a match for their thunder; especially as the Pope, in his present difficulties with the Emperor, could not afford to go all lengths in quarrelling with France.

The King, however, was far from desiring to oppress the clergy, being naturally inclined in their favour, though he would not tolerate their encroachments. He insisted that they should be subject in civil matters to the civil courts; but there was no danger, as far as he was concerned, that they would not find there an impartial and even a benign judge. This appeared in the affair of the Archbishop of Rheims, which occurred a little before the assembly at Saint Denis, and was partly the occasion of it. The high-stomached prelate, having some dispute with the citizens, whose lord he was, excommunicated them all, and, as they did not submit, appealed to the King. The King would have made inquiry: but the Archbishop refused indignantly to enter into the merits of the case. He held it sufficient that his adversaries were excommunicate; they should be treated as already condemned; the secular power was called in to punish, not to judge. Apart from the competence of royal jurisdiction, which he denied, it was impossible for him, he said, to plead against the townsfolk, or to answer the counter-charges of homicide and other matters which they brought: for they were outcast from the Church through his censure, and by the law of the Church he could have no dealing or communion with such.

This method of reasoning did not approve itself

to Louis, who refused to act without a previous inquiry. The Archbishop then called a provincial council, which deputed seven bishops to the King desiring him to do summary justice on Rheims. Their request being rejected, in November they held another council and put an interdict on their dioceses. The Pope confirmed it; as he did the excommunication of the citizens, adding that their debtors should be released from payment. But such sentences did not restore Rheims to the Archbishop. He had no strength to coerce the town, which imprisoned his officers. So he made a virtue of necessity, and submitted his case to the royal judgment. Both sides pleaded, and the decision went for the prelate at nearly every point in the dispute. The King sent two commissioners to Rheims to carry out the judgment, and to determine matters which remained in doubt. They ordered the citizens to pay the Archbishop a fine of ten thousand pounds, and to get themselves absolved and restored to communion.

Shortly after this the peace was again threatened by the King of Navarre. He was somewhat lifted above himself, perhaps, by his late accession of dignity and wealth: certainly he regretted the fair provinces given up to the King, and desired their recovery: and the personal tie of loyalty and friendship, which had bound him so close to the cause of the Regent, weakened a little when she no longer appeared ostensibly at the head of affairs. He was the instrument and public actor; but the intrigue was hatched and nursed by the Count of La Marche

and his ambitious wife. They revived the old project of alliance with Brittany, arranging that Theobald's daughter Blanche should marry the young Duke John. He fell in with the plan, and the marriage was hurriedly contracted, many great barons consenting and assisting. This was in breach of a solemn agreement made by Theobald with the King, not to marry his daughter without permission, under forfeit of three castles. In addition, the union with a newly reconciled rebel, in itself and by the circumstances of its making, was an unfriendly act. When the forfeit was required, Theobald, instead of fulfilling his pledge, made a treaty of mutual defence with the Count of La Marche, the complicity of Count Peter of Brittany being affirmed in the document, and began to gather men, fortify towns, and put himself in a posture of war.

On the other side a strong army was promptly assembled at Vincennes. But before it came to fighting, the Regent was negotiating, helped by many common friends who were grieved at the prospect of a new and disastrous strife. They urged upon Theobald the hopelessness of resistance, since he was far inferior in force and must be overwhelmed before his allies could assist; and encouraged him to desist from his rash enterprise and submit, throwing himself on the King's mercy and trusting to his former services and to his friendship with the Queen-mother. The same arguments were pressed by his own friends and councillors and carried the victory over his pride. He came to the royal camp

avowing his fault, offering to repair it, and seeking reconciliation. His overtures were accepted ; but it is related that Blanche, on meeting him, reproached him for ingratitude to the King, who had saved him from his enemies so often.

"Then the Count," says the chronicler, "regarding the Queen, who was so wise and so beautiful, was abashed. 'By my faith, Madam,' said he, 'my heart and my body, and all my land is at your order. There is nothing that could please you that I would not do willingly, and if God pleases, never will I go against you and yours.'"

By the conditions of peace he promised to surrender three strong places, and to stay seven years either beyond seas on the crusade to which he was already pledged, or in his kingdom of Navarre. He remained a little time longer at the Court; but his position was not tolerable. For he had many enemies there, who took every opportunity of casting in his teeth the old slanders of poisoning the late King and the Count of Boulogne. And the King's brother, Robert, Count of Artois, a hot and impetuous youth, held him in hatred for his recent behaviour, and vented his spite in all manner of slights and personal annoyance. Once a soft cheese was thrown in Theobald's face as he entered a room; and once the tail of his palfrey was cut by Robert's followers; and once they pelted him. When this came to the King he imprisoned the culprits and ordered them to be hanged. Then Robert came and declared that

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everything had been done by his command, and so obtained their release. Theobald, not desiring to press the quarrel, took the other course of withdrawing to Navarre. At the King's order, the Count of Brittany and a numerous escort of barons attended him as far as Nantes, whence he took ship. He consoled himself in retreat with music and poetry.

" And since much thought engenders melancholy, he was advised by wise and prudent men," says the chronicler, " to study the sweet sounds of the viol, and pleasant delectable songs. So were made between him and Gace Brulé the finest and most delightful and melodious ditties that ever were heard, both for voice and for viol. And he had them written up in the hall of his house at Provinc, and in that of his house at Troyes."

Thus this affair was settled. Theobald's repentance gave his promised allies no time to commit themselves to any overt act; and the quiet of the realm was kept undisturbed.



HENRY, COUNT OF BAR



AMAURY DE MONTFORT

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PERIOD OF PEACE (*Continued*)

1236-1241

A S Louis reached his majority and began to take greater hold of the direction of affairs, it seemed that a milder and more equable spirit was gradually infused into the royal rule. Some part of the change must be attributed to the changed circumstances of the time. After the course of ten rough and hazardous years the prospect cleared and the ways ran smooth. The remaining diseases and disorders of the kingdom required emollients rather than cautery. The stern and rigorous character of government, which watches every advantage and presses every opportunity, was less suitable to a state of security than to the former perils; and the obedience and respect of subjects having been gained, it was time to manage and humour their affections. By good fortune the young King's disposition ran in the suitable groove, being less severe, assertive, and imperious than that of his mother. She still by experience and authority had the most considered voice in France; and

the principles of conduct and policy in domestic and foreign business remained hers. But they were tempered somewhat in application to particulars by the King's gentler soul and more scrupulous conscience; which, without falling into mischievous excesses of good-nature, induced him to careful consideration of other persons' rights and to a greater compliance with their weakness or necessities.

Louis in this early period already promised the rare qualities which made him later on the judge and mediator not only of his own kingdom, but of Europe. When a question arose with the Countess of Flanders, who had married a new husband after Ferrand's death, about the conditions of his investiture, the King did not insist on judging the matter as suzerain in his own court, but referred it to the decision of three bishops. He was the successful mediator between factions of the citizens of Narbonne, who were battering down one another's

A.D. houses with rams; and again in a private  
1236 sedition at Orleans. In that place, where a number of students had settled and remained since the disturbance of the University of Paris, the town rose on the gown, and slew many scholars in the riot. It happened that among the dead were a nephew of the King of Navarre and another of the Count of La Marche, a young cousin of the Count of Brittany, and a kinsman of Archambaud of Bourbon. These great persons rode into Orleans with their horsemen and put the citizens to the sword. The trouble would have



SEAL OF SAINT LOUIS.



inflamed and spread had not the King settled it. He intervened also in a war on his borders between the Bishop of Liége and the Duke of Limbourg, who had built a castle on the Meuse from which he harried the bishopric. The parties allowed him to arbitrate and accepted his decision.

As regarded his great neighbours abroad, the King's policy rested on the lines which the Regent had shaped: to keep the English from gaining any further footing in France; and to remain friends with the Emperor, but holding a level balance between him and the Pope. It is said that the conscience of Louis troubled him now, as certainly it did at a later time, about the justice of the conquests made by his father and grandfather. Such scruples were common to princes of that age in times of sickness and adversity: the late King had avowed them on his death-bed; but Louis was singular in feeling them on other occasions. He did not, however, at present try to satisfy them, distasteful as they were to his mother and councillors, who alleged on the other side many arguments of good sense and expedience.

In 1235, Henry of England had negotiated a marriage for himself with the daughter of Simon, Count of Ponthieu. This alliance would have established him on the borders of Normandy, opposite his own coasts. Accordingly the Count of Ponthieu was given the choice of breaking it off, or of being driven from his possessions for marrying his daughter to the King's enemy. He chose the first alternative; and Henry, disappointed of the

match, obtained another in Eleanor of Provence, Queen Margaret's next sister, a marriage not injurious and indeed welcome to France. The princess was splendidly received on her passage through her brother-in-law's kingdom, and escorted by him and both Queens as far as the sea. Though there was no peace with England hostilities remained in suspense, the existing truce being prolonged in 1238 for a further period.

The Emperor Frederick II. had been befriended by the last two Kings of France; and the Regent had been careful to cherish a connection which was founded on the mutual interest of both parties. For the Emperor needed the support or at any rate the neutrality of European monarchs, and especially of the French, in his strife with the Papacy, which never ceased to smoulder and was now about to burst into its grand final conflagration; while his friendship was not less desirable to the King, seeing that it went far to secure the eastern borders, and to check the party among German princes which, being allied from of old with the English House, was therefore disposed to be troublesome to France. The good relations seemed to be threatened in 1235, when Frederick took the Princess Isabel of England for his third wife. He made his excuses to Louis, writing that the Pope had pressed him to the marriage and overruled the scruples which he himself felt on account of the French alliance: he professed that his hereditary love to France was unchanged, and invited the King to confirm it by a visit. Nevertheless he promised help to his brother-in-law

in recovering his continental possessions; without ever giving or perhaps intending to give it. His interest was plain against a quarrel with Louis, and had it been otherwise, his hands were soon full of other affairs. But a just suspicion of his versatile and dangerous policy threw some shadow for a time over their intercourse. When the Emperor summoned the princes of Christendom to meet him at Vaucouleurs in Lorraine on Saint John Baptist's Day, 1237, for conference about matters of common interest, the King accepted the invitation, but, not trusting the purposes of his host, prepared to go with a retinue of knights amounting to the numbers of an army. Either the news of this or some other reason caused Frederick to postpone the convention.

Pope and Emperor came to an open rupture in 1239, and made a great scandal in the world. Each party sent circular letters through Christendom, exculpating himself and accusing the other with long and violent invective. Their eloquence did not lack material. The Emperor's known freedom of thought and love of science, then counted magic, his Oriental looseness of life, and his unscrupulous policy, coloured the charges of heresy, blasphemy, immorality, and treachery, to which was added persecution of the Church. On the other hand, the excesses of the Italian adherents and mercenaries of the Holy Father, his intrigues among the subjects of the Empire, and the shifts by which he was forced to raise money for the war, afforded no edifying spectacle to Europe, and gave ground to the Emperor for reproaches of simony, sedition, cruelty,

avarice, and ingratitude, with which he seasoned his main argument, that he was fighting the battle of all temporal princes against the encroachment and aggression of the Roman See.

The Pope hurled solemn anathema against Frederick, declaring his subjects released from their oaths and bound to refuse obedience. He sent legates into France, England, and Germany, to see that the sentence was published in all the churches, every Sunday and Saint's day, with beaten bells and lighted candles; and to exact from the clergy a tax of a fifth of their revenues for the support of the papal cause. They were allowed to carry out their commission in France, and also in England, though Henry was the Emperor's brother-in-law. But Louis sent an embassy to Rome to arrange a reconciliation if he could: the English King joined his good offices, and matters seemed in train. It was reported at one time that the Pope was holding out, having heard that his legates had reaped a rich harvest; whereupon Louis ordered that the moneys collected from the clergy should not be taken out of the kingdom, till a settlement was reached. But no acceptable terms could be found: and the unhappy quarrel took its course.

Gregory, who claimed to have deposed the Emperor, was anxious to procure a rival; a method often used by his predecessors. Failing to tempt the German princes with the dangerous honour, he offered the Imperial crown to the Count of Artois. The offer was considered in the French Council, which advised its rejection. The barons were

outraged and affronted by the arrogant pretension of temporal supremacy, and expressed their resentment in a plain answer to the papal envoys.

" How does the Pope dare," they asked, " to disinherit the Emperor, who has no superior nor equal among Christian princes, before he has confessed or been convicted of any crime? For as regards that which is charged against him, we do not accept the judgment of his enemies, of whom the Pope is known to be chief. He has been blameless towards us and our good neighbour, and has kept word and bond; nor have we seen aught amiss in him towards the Catholic Faith. We know that he has fought truly for the Lord Christ, boldly encountering the perils of seafaring and battle: so much religion we have not yet found in the Pope. Rome cares nothing for the spilling of our blood, while we wreak her grudges. After destroying the Emperor she will tread under foot all the kings of the earth, lifting the horn of pride and arrogance."

They were concerned, however, by the accusation of heresy made against Frederick; and declared they would send a special embassy to inquire into and reassure them on this point.

" If we find nothing unsound, why should we make him our enemy? But if otherwise, yea, if any man, even the Pope himself, thinks evil against God, we will pursue him to destruction."

Envoy were sent to Frederick accordingly; and were satisfied with his profession of orthodoxy.

"I believe as a Christian," he told them, "whatever my enemy may say who thirsts after my blood and the overthrow of my honour: but the Pope has favoured my rebels against me, especially the Milanese, who are heretics."

But as the King repelled the Pope, when he stepped beyond his province, and in endeavouring to destroy the Emperor seemed to derogate from all temporal sovereignty; so he was equally ready in asserting his neutrality against the other side; and forced Frederick so to conduct the quarrel as not to disturb other countries or infringe the liberties of the Church outside his own dominions. In Italy and Germany he would not interfere: that was the domestic battle-field of the combatants. But he made it his care as far as possible to prevent the scandalous struggle from overflowing those bounds and encroaching on fields where his native interests might be involved and overwhelmed in the waves of discord.

The Count of Provence having espoused the papal party was attacked by his neighbour and old enemy, Raymond of Toulouse, instigated by the Emperor. Raymond obtained some success of arms, and took the opportunity to recapture his surrendered castles across the Rhone; the French knights, who held them, giving him sufficient pretext by riding to help the father of their Queen. Louis was angry at the news, blaming the Emperor. He sent a reinforcement of seven hundred horse to Provence, and gathered a larger army. But not wishing to be

hasty, he first inquired of Frederick whether he took this quarrel on himself. The Emperor protested with many excuses that he had neither intended nor desired injury to France; and that the Frenchmen themselves had begun, by making war on Toulouse in aid of Provence: it was not surprising that retaliation had followed. He suggested that both sides should restore their captures and make compensation for the mischief done: “in order that the seeds of hatred sown by the enemy of mankind may sprout no further, and our foes may not rejoice over our confusion.” His amicable professions led to a peaceful settlement.

The Pope summoned a general Council to meet in Italy in 1241 to consider the dispute with the Empire. Frederick had good reason to expect that such an assembly would be the ready instrument of his adversary, to register sentence in a prejudged case, and lend to papal condemnation the apparent weight and sanction of the universal Church. He declared himself resolved to hinder the Council. Nevertheless, by the efforts of the Cardinal-Legates in France and England a great concourse of prelates was gathered at Genoa in the spring; among them the Archbishops of Rouen, Arles, Bordeaux, and Besançon, the Bishops of Nismes and Puy, the Abbots of Cluny and Cisteaux and Fescamp. Their way on land was beset by the Imperial troops: Frederick offered them safe-conduct, desiring to lay his own case before them; but they refused, preferring to trust the waves and the convoy of the Genoese, who held themselves masters of those seas. An

Imperial fleet engaged them on the passage, sank three galleys and captured the rest, two-and-twenty in number, with three legates and over a hundred archbishops, bishops, and abbots on board. The prize was carried into Naples, where the prelates were kept in prison. The Emperor wrote to the princes of Europe, announcing the capture, and inviting them to rejoice with him over this signal blow given to the assault on the common privileges of kings.

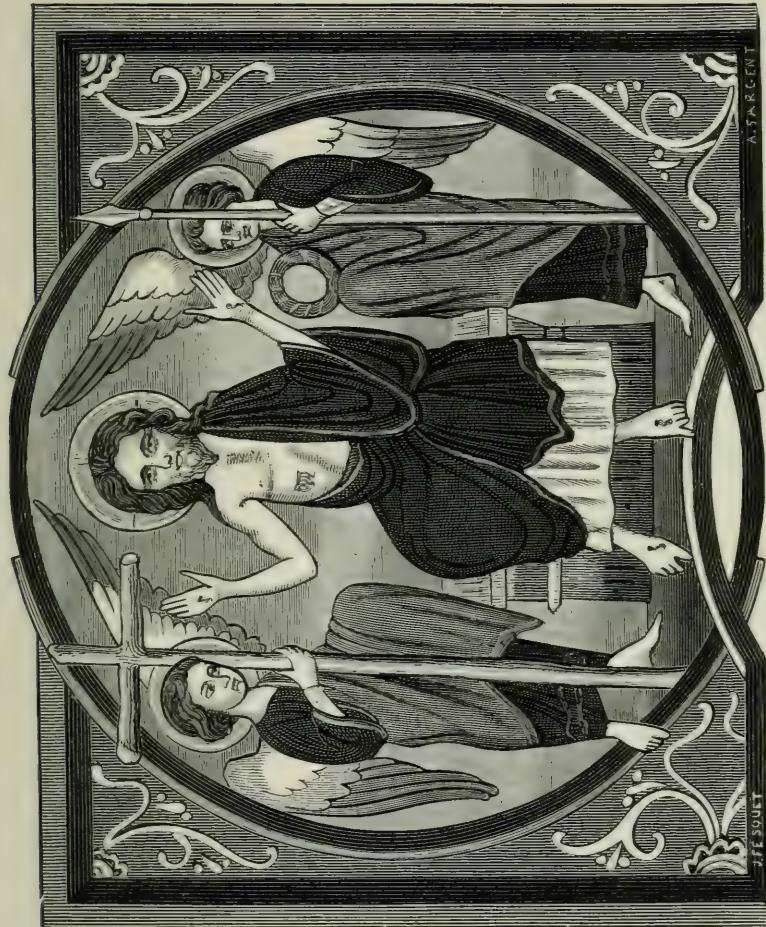
Louis, however, was not inclined to see the prelates of his realm seized and imprisoned for attending a Council to which they had been lawfully summoned by the highest authority of the Church. He asked their release; and not obtaining it, wrote again in a

A.D. higher tone. After recalling to the Emperor  
1242 the ancestral friendship of their houses and  
his own refusal to help the papal faction, he expressed surprise at the imprisonment of the French bishops, who were not implicated with the Pope and had done nothing but their duty. Their detention, he said, was injurious and dishonourable to himself.

"Let the Imperial wisdom weigh carefully what we write," the despatch concludes, "and not regard merely its own power and desire; for the kingdom of France is not so weak that it will let itself be ridden with spurs."

Frederick gave way to the menace, and set his prisoners at large.

Two great wounds were inflicted on the commonweal of Christendom, thus disordered and inflamed in its chief members, by the defeat of the crusaders



CHRIST THE JUDGE OF THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

MINIATURE FROM THE PSALTER OF SAINT LOUIS.

A. SPARGENT

J. F. SOUTT



in Syria, and the irruption of the Tartars into Hungary. In the course of the late civil wars many magnates and barons of France had undertaken the passage into Palestine. To do so was a frequent condition of peace, partly intended to occupy adventurous spirits and be a security against trouble at home. Others joined from devotion, or love of glory. The enterprise was long delayed: first by the unsettled state of the kingdom; then by the great preparations needful for a distant expedition; and by the discouragements offered by Pope and Emperor. Both of them professed indeed, as they were bound, general approval and patronage of the crusade and zealous desire to assist it; but both thought first of their own affairs, and required or urged postponement from time to time, as it served some particular end of policy.

A start was made at last in 1239. The crusaders gathered at Lyons. The King of Navarre was there, and Count Peter, having handed over Brittany to his son, now of age; Hugh, Duke of Burgundy, Amaury of Montfort, the Counts of Mâcon and Bar and Nevers, and great part of the baronage of France; some English also were with them. Louis had been active in forwarding the expedition. He provided equipment and money for many poor knights, who desired to join in the passage but had not the means to fit themselves out; he sent Amaury of Montfort, who was an experienced captain and Constable of France, assigning him a daily sum for his expenses; he undertook to guard the castles of the barons till their return. The Count of Mâcon

pledged his lands to the King for ten thousand pounds and a thousand a year. As he died in Palestine and his widow and heirs confirmed the cession, the county reverted to the Crown.

Most of the crusaders passed down the Rhone and sailed from Marseilles; others went by way of Brindisi. They landed at Acre, fifteen hundred knights and forty thousand mounted men. The occasion was favourable to their arms, from the disputes of the Saracen rulers. But they were ruined by the same disunion which had attended their rebellions at home. The King of Navarre was named leader on account of his rank, though most would have preferred the Duke of Burgundy. They acted without a common plan. Peter of Brittany began to plunder on his own account, and made a fortunate foray to the north, in which he gathered great booty. This raised the envy of the Duke of Burgundy and other princes; who, thinking to imitate his success, undertook a similar raid themselves, unknown to him or to the King of Navarre. But the Saracen horsemen surprised them in the sands near Gaza at the end of a long night march. The weary and floundering troops of the Christians were shamefully defeated. The Count of Bar and the lord of Clermont were killed, with many others; the Duke of Burgundy fled; Amaury of Montfort was taken and sent in captivity to Egypt.

This reverse destroyed the courage of the crusaders, who attempted no further offensive operations. Their feeble and divided state was only saved by

the greater discords of the Infidel. By aid of the Templars the King of Navarre and the Count of Brittany were able to patch up a truce with the Sultan of Damascus, and returned to France a year after their departure without waiting to see it carried out. Their hopes were so low that they did not stay for the arrival of Richard of Cornwall, who had already started with an English force, being splendidly entertained by the King in his passage through France. He reached Acre fifteen days after they left, and was joined by the Duke of Burgundy and those of the French who remained. On the advice of the Hospitallers, who always ran contrary to the Templars, he abandoned the truce with Damascus and made another with the Sultan of Egypt, who was the main head of Saracen power; thus procuring the release of the French captives, and a nominal surrender of Jerusalem itself and many other places in the Holy Land. He fortified Ascalon, and buried the bones of the dead on the field of Gaza, endowing a priest to say masses for their souls. Then he came home, leaving the Christians of Palestine in their former precarious state, chiefly maintained by the strength of the military orders of the Temple and the Hospital, which one or the other Sultan found useful in the balance against his rival.

The ill fortune of the crusaders was attributed by many to the internal dissensions of the Christian world. What blessing, or what human probability of success, it was asked, could be expected to follow an enterprise against the Infidels, when Pope and Emperor, who should be working together in the

holy cause, were entirely occupied in pursuing a war of mutual destruction ? And men's thoughts were hardly recovered from this grievous course of reflection, when they were turned again into the same channel by the growing rumours of a new danger.

This was the advance of the Tartars : a horde of migratory horsemen, flowing out of the vast and silent recesses of Asia, like some sudden, unexplained plague of nature, on the haunts of civilised men. It was the blind surge of a moving nation, unknown and terrible, spreading to its limits in irresistible flood. First they overran Asia Minor, sacking the rich sultanate of Iconium. The Saracens of those parts, forgetting their enmity with the Christians in presence of so strange and barbarous

A.D. foes, sent an embassy to France and Eng-  
1238 land, asking for aid to stem the torrent which threatened to overwhelm the whole world. But the danger was too far, and the hatred of Infidels too strong, for their prayers and arguments to be effective. The common feeling was expressed by the Bishop of Winchester in England, who said that the dogs should be let devour one another; then the remnant of them could be cleaned off the earth, and all men be brought into the Catholic Church.

In three years' time, however, the peril was pressing on Europe. The Tartars did not go southward, but streamed round the coast of the Black A.D. Sea into Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia.  
1241 Terrifying tales of their appearance, numbers, and ferocity reached the West. They were

little men with great heads, thick necks and bodies, long arms, and legs little and feeble; of wonderful courage and endurance; riding on strong horses. Their aspect was savage, their cries horrible; they were clothed in skins, and armed with iron knives and bows, being very skilful archers. They ate no corn; but fed on the flesh of cattle, horses, or men, which they carried in dried strips; their drink was fermented milk or blood. Thus provisioned they moved great distances with incredible speed, foddering their horses on leaves and roots when grass failed, and crossing rivers and marshes by help of inflated hides. The women fought like the men, following the host in waggons, which carried all their goods. They neither took nor gave quarter; and did not spare man, woman, or child. They were believed to worship their swords and to be without laws or government; but little could be learned on this head, since they refused to speak or to eat if captured, and were obstinate under whatever torture.

Such were the enemies who threatened Christendom. They defeated the Hungarians, and so wasted the whole country that men returning after they had passed found no food but dead bodies. Their ravages went farther west; and the fear of them prevented the men of Friesland from coming to England for the herring fishery. The Duke of Lorraine wrote that they had entered Poland and were likely to destroy the churches and peoples of North Germany. Men's uneasy minds believed them a scourge sent by the judgment of God and predicted

in the Revelation. It was said that their Khan had inquired of his idols, and been told to advance boldly, since three spirits had been sent before his face to confound his adversaries: the spirits of discord and unbelief and fear. The relation shows to what pitch of despair and conscious weakness Europe was reduced. Fasts and prayers were ordered in the churches for the appeasement of the quarrel between Pope and Emperor, and for the overthrow of the Tartars.

France was infected with the general dread of this calamity; but the King is related to have discussed it calmly and cheerfully, saying that, if the Tartars came, there was this comfort: to meet them, and either drive them back, or else earn a martyr's crown by dying in battle for the Christian faith. The opportunity, however, did not arrive. The invading tide, having reached its flood, began to ebb. The Emperor, though complaining that his arms were hampered by the unnatural hostility of Rome, contrived to send great succours into Hungary; by which assistance the Tartars were defeated in a bloody battle on the banks of the Danube; and on this account, or, more probably, because of the death of their great Khan, they retreated soon afterwards.

It has been said above that certain Mohammedan princes sent an embassy to France to ask assistance. One of these was the notorious Old Man of the Mountain, who had entered into relations with Louis the year before in a very curious manner. This singular sovereign ruled a tribe, or rather a

fanatic sect, called Assassins, whose name has become a word of reproach. They inhabited the mountains of Southern Syria; and though contemptible in numbers, made their chief formidable by the extraordinary habit of absolute obedience in which they were trained. They were like human weapons in his hand; every command he gave was carried out blindly by his individual subjects, though it involved immediate and certain destruction to themselves; for they believed that dying thus they went straight to Paradise. He used this power, which put the lives of other sovereigns at his disposal, alike for purposes of piety and profit; despatching messengers of death to execute enemies of his religion; or levying blackmail on neighbouring potentates as the price of safety. The military orders established in Palestine almost alone resisted his demands: for being corporations with elective heads, to whom a competent successor was easily provided, they despised his assassins, attacked him boldly, and reduced him to terms and the payment of tribute.

Having heard that the King of France was a monarch of great Christian zeal, and about to take the cross, he sent two devotees to murder him. But, learning soon after from the Templars that he was mistaken; that the King himself was not coming on the crusade; and also that he had several brothers almost equal in age, he repented of the unprofitable design, and despatched two men more to stop its execution. The later envoys arrived in France first, and presented themselves to Louis with an account

of the purpose of their journey. He was naturally disturbed by thought of the daggers which might strike him at any moment unawares, and had himself guarded wherever he went by men carrying copper maces. Meanwhile, by his leave and help, the Syrian envoys were searching for their compatriots, and, not succeeding at Paris, went to Marseilles, where they found them. All four returned to the King, who, glad to have escaped the danger, and attributing the repentance of the Assassin prince to Divine interposition, and perhaps considering it wise to conciliate such an adversary, dismissed them with rich gifts for themselves and their master.

The piety and zeal, which fame thus reported as far as Asia, were manifested in the usual ways of the time. Louis was assiduous in the exercises of religion. On his visits to Royaumont he lived and fared like the monks, observing the rule of silence, and restraining his younger brothers and courtiers, who sometimes accompanied him, from wandering about, playing, and conversing loudly, as is the manner of such persons in such places. Both he and his wife were constant alms-givers and feeders of the poor, and indeed liberal in any good cause. Louis was not a complacent and foolish spender : he squandered no treasure on favourites, and nourished no swarms of hungry Provençals and Savoyards, like his brother of England. The English nobles remarked the difference, drawing a bitter parallel against their own King. But his purse was always open to relieve a needy noble or poor scholar, or to give a dowry to the daughter of an impoverished

house. He helped with a large hand the begging Emperor of the East, Baldwin of the family of Courtenay, who came through Europe soliciting men and money to establish his tottering throne, and not only got great sums and many soldiers from the King of France, but having pledged to him the county of Namur for fifty thousand pounds, received it back without any payment.

The hatred of heretics and Jews, as enemies of God, was a virtue highly esteemed by that age, though repugnant and hardly intelligible to this. Louis shared it with all pious persons and with most who were not, and was not backward in lending the secular arm to the Church for her task of chastising and rooting out errors thought damnable and destructive of men's everlasting souls. The heresy called Paterine or Bulgarian, the tenets of which it is not needful to discuss, had gained a strong footing about this time in Flanders and the northern parts of France. A certain Brother Robert, himself converted from the same error, received in the year 1236 a commission from the Holy See to extirpate it; and was assisted by the King with the necessary men and money and commendation to the local authorities. He was a keen hunter of the game, and was called the Hammer of Heretics. Within a few months he seized fifty persons at Peronne, Cambrai, and other places, convicted them before the episcopal courts, and burned or buried them alive. Many others recanted; and these were shaved close and their garments marked with a cross before and behind. Sometimes they were shut up for a season

to repent and meditate. It is related that both the King and the Queen-mother intervened on occasions to rescue victims from his fury.

Brother Robert continued in his inquisition for several years; but it appears that his sharp surgery had cut away the disease; for executions became rare. His greatest exploit, however, was in a new field, in 1239, when he burned over one hundred and eighty heretics at once at Mont-Vimer in Champagne, in the presence of the King of Navarre and many bishops: "a mighty holocaust," writes a contemporary monk, "and acceptable to the Lord." After this he was found to have abused his powers, and in his reckless and uncurbed zeal to have confounded innocent with guilty. A papal letter suspended him from further exercise of his office; he was tried and condemned to perpetual imprisonment.

The Jews escaped more easily. The theory and practice of religious persecution, which Christianity inherited from that people, and which it has often turned against them so terribly, bore lightly upon them in France in this reign. It was rather their usury that was reprobated and repressed. That practice, it is true, and those who followed it, were more hated, by the King at any rate, as being offensive to God than as injurious to society. Ordinances were made against Jewish usurers, which failed, as ever, to be effective. But they did not suffer in their persons except from the periodic violence of the populace: it is even recorded that in Poitou they received shelter from the mob in a

royal castle. Their usurious and illegal gains were confiscated. Louis did not keep the confiscations for himself, though to do so was the habit of rulers of the time, and in part, it may be suspected, the motive of such legislation. He returned the money to the debtors from whom it had been extorted, as far as he could find them. The rest was given, by the Pope's advice, to the Emperor Baldwin.

But if the King did not, like other princes, plunder the Jews for his profit, he detested their sect no less, as is shown in his public burning of the Talmud. The step was recommended by the University of Paris, which had examined the work and its commentaries upon an order from the Pope. The Archbishop of Sens, a man of great learning, at first dissuaded the King; but he dying suddenly of a colic just a year after, this was considered to be a judgment of God, and Louis burned all copies of the Talmud he could lay hands on.

A.D.  
1241

His piety was active, though less invidiously, in the acquisition of relics of undoubted sanctity. Many such were still preserved among the treasures of Constantinople, and in the present distress of the Eastern Empire appeared richer assets than any masterpiece of ancient art. It was not thought seemly to make them objects of barter and sale. But the Emperor Baldwin, willing to reward and encourage the King's generosity, presented to him a most precious and celebrated relic, the Crown of Thorns. The Venetians had it in pawn for ten thousand pounds, and the gift carried the necessity of redemption. Two friars were sent to Constantinople for this

purpose, and to bring the Crown to France. The circumstances of its arrival are fully related in a narrative drawn up by the King's own order. On having word of its approach—it was in August of the year 1239—he went out joyfully to meet it, accompanied by his mother and brothers, the Archbishop of Sens and other prelates, and as many barons and knights as could be gathered at sudden notice. They met the returning envoys about five miles beyond Sens, bearing a wooden chest. Opening it, they found a silver coffer fastened with the seals of the magnates of the Eastern Empire and of the Doge of Venice. When these were broken a case of pure gold appeared within, containing the Holy Crown itself. All gathered round to see it, transported with devout fervours, as if they beheld the sacred Head of the Lord, that once had worn it. The boxes were then closed and made fast with the royal seal. Next day Sens was entered. The whole populace came to meet them rejoicing. The King and the Count of Artois walked barefoot, carrying the reliquary on their shoulders. They were surrounded by knights and nobles, also barefoot. The procession of people was headed by the clergy, carrying bones of the saints and other relics. The citizens displayed their richest treasures in the streets; the whole town was full of lighted candles, and sounding with bells and organs and joyous voices of worship. The sacred Crown was borne into the church of Saint Stephen, and there uncovered before the people. Next day it was carried on towards Paris, attended by a triumphant concourse along the road. Coming to the



RELIQUARY OF THE TRUE CROSS.

KNOWN AS THE RELIQUARY OF BALDWIN.



city on the eighth day at dawn, they were met by innumerable crowds, and by clergy in copes and albs, bearing large waxen tapers. A great pulpit was erected on open ground outside the walls, from which the relic was displayed; while prelates and clergy in their robes preached gratulatory sermons to devout multitudes. The procession was then resumed, and entered the city in the same order amid the same ceremonies and rejoicing as at Sens. It passed to the cathedral of Notre Dame, where a solemn service was held; and thence to the Palace, to deposit the Crown in the chapel of Saint Nicholas, which was soon frequented by pilgrims from all parts of Christendom.

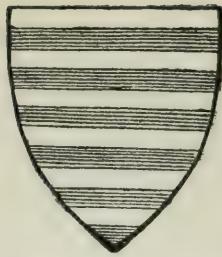
Two years later, by a similar transaction, Louis acquired a portion of the True Cross, redeeming it from the Venetians, to whom Baldwin had pledged it for twenty-five thousand pounds. It is related that this relic, even more precious than the former, was received in Paris with no less state. The King with the two Queens and the Princes, the archbishops, bishops, abbots, and magnates of France, after displaying the Holy Wood to the populace from a platform outside the walls, as before, entered the city in procession. Louis himself, who had fasted for three days in preparation, carried the Cross, holding it aloft, his arms being supported when they became weary by the nobles who walked beside him. Then came the two Queens and the Princes, bearing the Crown of Thorns on a litter. All went barefoot and bareheaded and fasting. They followed the former order of going, first to Notre Dame, then to the

Palace. "A more solemn or joyful sight," says the chronicler, "was never seen in the kingdom of France."

In order to give these treasures a worthy abode, the King built in the close of his Palace the church which still stands, and is called the Holy Chapel. The work was the admiration of that age, as it has been of those succeeding, no less for the beauty of its fabric than for the splendour and richness of the shrines in which the holy relics were contained. The building is said to have cost forty thousand pounds; a hundred thousand was spent on the shrines, which were encrusted with gold and jewels and the most precious kinds of stone.



THE KING OF ENGLAND



HUGH, COUNT OF LA MARCHE

## CHAPTER V

### THE ENGLISH WAR

1241-1243

Louis VIII. had by his will devised appanages to his younger sons, with which they were to be invested as they came of age. Robert had received the county of Artois; and to the next brother, Alphonso, Poitou and Auvergne were allotted. Alphonso, who had been married to Joan, the heiress of Toulouse, according to the provisions of Meaux, reached his majority in 1241. In the same year the King brought him to Saumur on the border of Poitou, intending to install him in his new dominions. The occasion was marked with pomp and a great assembly of magnates and barons, in order the more to impress the provinces, which had hardly yet forgotten their old allegiance to Aquitaine. On the day of Saint John the Baptist, Louis knighted his brother and several other youths of rank; and invested him with the counties of Poitou and Auvergne. High festivities followed, which Joinville, who was present, has described. The banquet was spread in the spacious cloisters built by

Henry Plantagenet, the second of England. The King, attired in a vest of blue satin and a surcoat and mantle of rose-colour trimmed with ermines, sat at the chief table with his brother, now styled Count of Poitiers, the Count of La Marche, Count Peter of Brittany, and the King of Navarre. The Counts of Artois and Soissons carved and served his meats; his chair was guarded by Humbert of Beaujeu, Constable of France, Enguerrand of Coucy, and Archambaud of Bourbon, each attended by thirty knights clothed in silk, behind whom stood trains of yeomen in blazoned tabards. Twenty Archbishops and Bishops ate at the middle table; and beyond them was that of the Queen-mother, served by the Infant of Portugal, the Count of Saint Paul, and a young German prince, son of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary. In the other cloisters, and on the turf in the centre, feasted a multitude of knights, three thousand in number. Men said that so many garments of silk and cloth of gold had never been seen before.

After gorgeous ceremonies of investiture, the Court moved to Poitiers, that Alphonso might receive the homage of his vassals, which was paid with apparent willingness in the face of so imposing a display of wealth and power. But he mounted a dangerous seat. The claim of the English King to Poitou was not renounced, nor his interest dead. The turbulent nobles of the province, loving a distant master and a light hand, and accustomed to balance France against England, though acknowledging the conquest, still kept some intelligence with their ancient suzerain, who was established in the neigh-

bouring borders of Guyenne. The chief among them was Hugh of La Marche. Though a vassal of Poitou he took rank with the magnates of France. He was lord of Marche and Angoulême and much besides, the head of a House which had given kings to Cyprus and Jerusalem, and was married to the Queen dowager of England, whose aspiring spirit was ill content with a lower place. Having fought and negotiated with the King on an equal footing, he was reluctant to admit the closer and more irksome supremacy of a prince of the blood, which reduced both his power and dignity, placed a master between him and the King, and made him second man in a region where he had been first. He feasted with the rest at Saumur and paid his homage at Poitiers ; but, withdrawing immediately, gathered his forces and lay at Lusignan, threatening the Court. Louis would have been glad to be back in Paris; but he did not venture to move until, after several conferences with the Count, an agreement was made, very disadvantageous to the Crown, by which war was averted for the moment.

It was only a short respite. Count Hugh at once set himself to procure allies and contrive a league against the King. Henry of England listened gladly to his overtures, being particularly aggrieved by the contempt of his title shewn in granting Poitou to a French prince, when he had himself lately professed to confer it on his brother Richard. He forgot his former campaigns, and saw a most favourable chance of recovering the dominions of his House. The Count of Toulouse came in readily,

hoping to shake off the fetters of the treaty which bound him, and the unwelcome heirship of his son-in-law. The King of Aragon joined on account of his pretensions in the south of France. The allies, already thus formidable, approached the Kings of Castile and Navarre and the Emperor himself, and by the common delusion of such coalitions seem to have expected, on slight grounds and the mere encouragement of one another, the accession of those princes; the event, however, disappointed them. Peter of Brittany was with them at first; but, for a change, turned loyal, and betrayed their plans to the King.

At Christmas Alphonso held a court at Poitiers and summoned the Count of La Marche among his other vassals to keep the festival. As matters were not yet ripe for war, Hugh was inclined to obey; but changed his mind on the eve of going, under the persuasion and reproaches of his wife, who had no mind to give precedence to the Countess of Poitiers, and was still sore from the slights which she conceived the two Queens to have offered her in the summer. They came; but only to defy Alphonso to his face and renounce allegiance; then setting fire to the house where they had been lodged, rode out of the town with thundering threats, surrounded by armed men and archers with crossbows at stretch. Alphonso complained to the King, who summoned Hugh to appear at Paris and answer for his conduct. When the call was refused, he brought the matter up in Parliament before the peers, asking what should be done with a vassal who wished to

hold his land without a lord and denied faith and homage. They replied that in such a case the lord should seize his fief. "By my name," said Louis,—for that was the only oath he used,—"the Count of La Marche wishes to hold in this manner lands which are fiefs of France since the time of King Clovis, who conquered Aquitaine from Alaric the pagan."

The barons were strong against the Count, who, on his part, began to urge the English King to act quickly. Letters were sent, by Hugh or by Isabel, desiring him to come at once, with or without men, but with abundant supplies of money, which would raise and nourish an army from Gascony and Poitou. By this means, and with the help of Toulouse and Aragon, not to speak of the other confederates, his ancient provinces might be reconquered.

The flattering prospect captivated Henry and his brother Richard and his Provençal counsellors, but was less attractive to the barons and prelates of England, whom he called together in January to ask an aid of money. They were not anxious to aggrandize the King, which result must follow from a successful war abroad; were tired of his expenses; mistrusted Poitevin promises; and were particularly displeased by the plan of campaign, which required nothing but money from England, and assigned to them the burden of supporting an expedition from which they could gain no advantage. They therefore told the King in the plainest language that his extortions were too great; that he had broken all the promises on the strength

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of which former subsidies had been granted ; and had not only plundered them himself, but had allowed the Pope's legates to follow and glean after his reaping. They were surprised that he had undertaken so hazardous a business without consulting them. There was truce with France ; let him wait till it expired, or till the French broke it ; then they would be willing to offer him their advice. In breaking it wantonly, in attacking a great and powerful kingdom, and supporting its rebels, he was acting shamefully, to the peril of his soul and reputation and fortune. Finally they flatly refused to give any subsidy.

Henry, however, was obstinately set on the enterprise, and swore in anger that, come what might, he would cross the sea at Easter. He dealt with his reluctant subjects, calling them into his presence one by one ; and by the various arts of cajolery, menace, or exhortation, as seemed most suitable to each case, and by holding up the example of others, induced many to contribute privately the aid which collectively they had refused. By this means, though some stood firm, he gathered considerable sums of money, and was able to sail from Portsmouth in the middle of May, with his brother Richard and seven other Earls, three hundred knights, and thirty casks of silver coin. After touching at Finisterre for a single day he landed at Royan, at the mouth of the Garonne, where his mother met him ; he thence went to Pons and was received by Reginald, lord of the place, and by other barons of Saintonge.

Meanwhile the Count of La Marche and his party

were already in arms in Poitou; nor had the French King been slow to take his measures. In the early spring he sent eighty armed galleys to guard La Rochelle against attack from the sea, and summoned the levy of his vassals and of the towns to a rendezvous at Chinon. A force assembled in April of four thousand men-at-arms fully appointed, with twenty thousand slingers and footmen, and a baggage train of two thousand wagons. At the head of this army the King marched into Poitou, his numbers increasing as he went by streams of men arriving from every side.

The strategy of the rebels was to hold castles and strong places, without venturing a pitched battle in the open, to which their strength was unequal until the whole force of their confederacy could be brought to bear. To this purpose they carefully strengthened all their fortifications, barricaded and obstructed the passes and the roads, dug up the grass and the growing crops, cut down the vines, ruined the buildings, destroyed all food which they could not carry in, and choked, polluted, or poisoned the wells and streams, that the enemy might find nothing but an inhospitable and dangerous desert outside the walls of the towns and fortresses.

These measures had a success later, in the sickness and want which overtook the French army, but did not hinder its first operations, so well was it provisioned with all kinds of supplies. Monstreuil and the tower of Béruge were taken by storm. Montcontour fell and Fontenay le Comte. Vouvent and Mervent surrendered on terms, and Geoffrey

their master, a cadet of Lusignan, made his peace, forsaking his kinsman and feudal lord. Louis then laid siege to Fontenay l'Abattu, Hugh's strongest castle, standing on the ridge of Saintonge, thought impregnable, and held by the bastard of La Marche, a famous soldier, with a numerous and faithful garrison. The attack was pressed day and night with all the resources known to military art; engines of war battered the place with stones, and archers shot a hail of arrows at anything that showed from behind the battlements: while constant assaults kept the defenders at full strain and quickly wore down their strength and endurance.

As the siege was proceeding an embassy came to the camp from the King of England, who had not hitherto declared his intentions openly, but had written complaining of various matters as infractions of the truce, in order to build up a better pretext for breaking it himself. At the same time he hoped that the French army would exhaust its strength in long sieges, while his own increased. Their rapid and unexpected successes made it necessary to act before all the strongholds of his ally were lost. His envoys represented that their master was pained and surprised by the conduct of the King of France, which violated, he declared, the truce between them. According to the narrative of the English historian, Louis answered mildly, protesting that he had not broken the truce, and was so far from wishing to do so that he desired to prolong it for three years. He was also prepared to make large concessions, in order to settle the English claim on Poitou and Normandy,

which his father had recognised in the treaty of London. But he must be left to deal with his own rebels and traitors without interference. The Counts of La Marche and Toulouse were his subjects, not England's; the truce did not include them, nor should it shelter them from the punishment of their revolt. In sustaining them Henry himself was neglecting his solemn obligation towards France, as well as the close bond of relationship which united the two royal families.

Louis was led to offer these concessions, the historian continues, partly through fear lest the coalition should be too strong for him, if the Poitevins and English were aided by Aragon and Castile and Toulouse, and possibly by a rising in Normandy; but chiefly through respect for the oath which his father was said to have sworn to restore his rights to the English King. Be that as it may, the offer was rejected. Henry could hardly desert his allies at this stage, and hoped moreover to gain more by their help than was now conceded. He sent a formal defiance and declaration of war, alleging for cause the attack on his father, as he called him, the Count of La Marche; a reason which left the French King in the right, according to the opinion of the time, since the Count was clearly in unprovoked rebellion against his sovereign.

Nevertheless Louis was troubled at first with doubt; but being reassured by his counsellors that his father's oath was no longer binding, since the English had themselves broken the treaty of London in several particulars, he became easy in mind, and

pressed the siege with double vigour. At the same time the oriflamme of France was unfurled, as against a foreign enemy, and the general levy of the kingdom summoned to war. Fontenay l'Abattu was carried in fifteen days; the captain and part of the garrison were taken alive. The King refused to hang them for their stubborn defence, though urged by many to make this example. But the capture of the place spread a panic terror through the neighbouring country. No more resistance was attempted: as the royal army approached, the magistrates and seneschals of towns and castles came out with the keys, and begged for terms. The strongest places were garrisoned for the King; other fortifications were razed.

The Count of La Marche saw his plans and power falling to pieces; now, beginning to repent his rashness, he joined his forces to the English. After advancing to Tonnay they retreated and lay in the meadows on the banks of the Charente, opposite the town of Taillebourg, sixteen hundred horse and twenty thousand foot, with seven hundred crossbowmen. The stream is deep and unfordable; it was spanned by a narrow stone bridge with a castle at one end. As the French army occupied the town,

A.D. which welcomed their entry, the English  
1242 marched down to the river to dispute the passage, and sent five hundred men to hold the bridge. The movement was made by night; in the morning, which was Sunday, the 20th of July, they saw on the other side the royal standard of France, a host of pavilions with banners

flying, and tents like a great and populous city. When it was plain that he was far outnumbered, Henry turned on the Count of La Marche with reproaches: "Where is your promise which you made in your letters, assuring us you would raise a great enough army to meet the King of France without fear, and that we need only take care to provide money?" "I never did," replied the Count. Richard of Cornwall joined in: "Yes, for I have with me here your letter to that effect." "I never wrote or signed such a letter," said Hugh. "What," said the King, "what are you saying? Have you not often sent and begged me by letter and message to come here, and blamed me for delay? Where is your promise?" "I never did this," Hugh declared, with a horrible oath. "Blame your mother, my wife." And he added, swearing and growling, "By God's throat! it is she who has wrought this business without my knowledge."

While this family quarrel was proceeding, the enemy were assaulting the bridge and making the passage in boats. Louis was in the front of the attack, and in great danger for a time, having advanced so quickly with a few followers that he found twenty to one against him. But reinforcements were soon pushed up, and the bridge was won. The whole French army was preparing to cross, and it seemed that the English King must be taken or killed. In the emergency, Richard of Cornwall, doffing his armour and taking a stick in his hand, went forward to ask an armistice. He was allowed to cross the bridge and make his way to the King, who had returned

to his tent. The French made him welcome, for they held him in high esteem because of the part he had taken in liberating their captives in Palestine ; on this account, and because it was Sunday, one day's truce was granted. "Lord Earl, lord Earl," Louis said to him, as he was leaving, "I have given you this truce of a day and a night that you may take more wholesome counsel what to do ; for night is the mother of counsel." "It was for that purpose I sought the truce," Richard replied. Returning to his brother, he pressed on him the necessity of immediate retreat. Henry needed little persuading : they fed hastily, gathered their baggage, and as soon as night fell rode off, not sparing spurs, followed by their whole army in trouble and confusion, and for the most part fasting. Henry did not draw bridle till he reached Saintes.

The French crossed the river the same night and followed towards Saintes on Tuesday. As a party of foragers plundered in advance they were fiercely attacked by the Count of La Marche, who rode out against them with his sons and a body of men, telling no one, being stung by his step-son's reproaches, and wishing to repair his fame. At first the foragers were driven in, then reinforced. The shouting and noise of battle reached both armies ; both pushed forward to aid, and soon a general engagement was set up in the vineyards and narrow lanes around Saintes. The English fought well, Simon Montfort of Leicester, William Longsword of Salisbury, and Roger Bigod of Norfolk, showing especial valour ; but numbers forced them back with a loss of many

dead and prisoners. Some of the French in the ardour of fighting followed the retreating enemy into the town itself and were captured.

Louis drew off his forces, not venturing to attempt Saintes by storm; but the victory was conclusive in his favour, and turned the balance of all who wavered. Its first effect was seen in overtures from the Count of La Marche, who had been much disengaged by the loss of his fortresses, and since the retreat from Taillebourg got no comfort from Henry, but black looks and blame for all the disasters of the campaign. If the English returned home he would be left at the King's mercy, and prudence bade anticipate the possible desertion. He sent a message to his old friend, Peter of Brittany, who was marshal of the French army, begging him and the Bishop of Saintes to invoke the royal clemency and forgiveness for a repentant rebel. Peter accepted the mission, pleased, no doubt, to see another reduced to the same submission as himself. Openly, he said to the King that the war was being stifled by its contriver; that mercy might properly be shown to a liegeman who had gone astray, but who was now sufficiently punished by misfortune, and desired sincerely to return. Apart he hinted, with winks and whispers, that the King could tighten the terms as he pleased, when the Count was brought to his knees. The Bishop, a more simple and honest mediator, pleaded for amnesty on suitable conditions. Louis was well disposed to listen; and favourable news of the negotiation being conveyed to Count Hugh, he separated himself from the English, who

still remained at Saintes, intending to make it their headquarters for a time.

As King Henry was sitting down to meat, having returned from an expedition to Pons, just a week after the battle, a French knight came in at breathless speed, one whom Richard had ransomed from the Saracens, to tell his preserver that the King of France was about to surround Saintes, meaning to blockade it with all the force of his kingdom, and to capture the whole English army. He added that the Count of La Marche had made his peace, and that all Poitou would follow his example. He had scarcely finished when another messenger came from the Count's sons, saying that the townspeople had intelligence with the enemy, and that if the English lay there that night they would be taken, or at any rate closely beleaguered. Henry hurried from the table, mounted a swift horse, and ordering the town to be set on fire rode at full speed, not caring who followed, to Blaye-on-Garonne, fourteen leagues off.

The rest, as they heard the news, streamed after him as fast as they could, a disorderly, miserable rout of men and horses and baggage, so confused with panic that they rushed forward blindly, not stopping to rest or eat on the way, except for the fruits and berries they plucked from the roadside. Their track was marked by dead horses, exhausted men, and abandoned waggons. The King himself lost on the road all the furniture and ornaments of his chapel, as well as the relics which he carried with him; for he was very devout. He reached Blaye, having gone without food or sleep the best part of two

days and two nights ; but thought even that place unsafe, and decided to retire to Bordeaux where was his wife, who had just given birth to a daughter.

Louis entered Saintes, and was welcomed by the citizens ; the same day he proceeded to Pons and received the submission of Reginald. On the morrow the Count of La Marche came in with his wife and three sons and approached the King with every mark of contrition. Weeping and kneeling at his feet they cried, " Have pity on us, Sire ! pardon our misdeeds, according to the greatness of your mercy." It is related that Geoffrey of Rancon, a lord greatly wronged by the Count, who had sworn an oath to let his hair grow long like a woman till he was avenged, when he saw the humiliation of so great and proud a family, called for a barber, and had his hair trimmed on the spot before them all.

The conditions of peace were sufficiently onerous, though less so than those suggested by Peter of Brittany. Hugh gave up for ever all his castles which had been taken in Poitou, and three others for three years ; he bound himself to serve the King for three years with two hundred knights, at his own charges, against the Count of Toulouse or anyone else ; surrendered the yearly pension of five thousand pounds, due under former treaties ; did homage to the King for Angoulême, and to Alphonso for Lusignan and La Marche. Otherwise he was confirmed in his possessions, and received a promise that no truce should be made with England without consulting his interests. He was sent immediately, along with the Count of Brittany, to attack

Raymond of Toulouse, who was thus prevented from giving any aid to the English, though he visited Henry at Bordeaux, encouraged him to continue the war, and took from him a considerable sum of money.

The rest of Poitou and the country up to the Garonne, seeing that the English King had abandoned them as a sailor leaves a sinking ship, hastened to submit. The defection was general, of barons as well as towns, Montauban only with one or two other places of little importance holding out. Louis advanced to within a league of Blaye, intending to march thither and even to Bordeaux, and to finish the campaign by occupying all Guyenne. The enemy was in no condition to withstand him, and had little chance of reinforcement from England, even had the barons there favoured the undertaking : for a convoy of men and money, which the Archbishop of York, who was Regent, despatched, was dispersed and driven ashore by a tempest ; and, in the predatory naval war which followed, the ships of Rochelle and Calais and the Breton and Norman coasts kept the advantage over those of the Cinque Ports and drove them into their harbours.

But obstacles of nature and of human character checked the tide of conquest. The wasted country was no longer able to support the numerous French army as it increased in multitude, exhausted its original supplies, and marched farther from its base. The polluted waters and the heats of August bred disease among men and beasts enfeebled by toil and hunger. The malady became epidemic.

Eighty barons died, each of whom fought under his own banner, and twenty thousand of the soldiery. The King himself fell grievously ill. Remembering his youth and delicate health, and that the sickness of a southern campaign had carried off his father, the prudent among his counsellors became anxious to remove him to a more healthy climate, away from the hardships of the field. Besides this, many great lords did not desire to see the victory too complete, or the English entirely driven out, considering their dominion in France a convenient counterpoise to the royal power, and a refuge for themselves, if need arose. Accordingly, from one motive or the other, a strong party advocated a truce, which Henry continued to demand. It was granted in the end of August, and the army returned northwards with all possible haste, leaving garrisons in Poitou. The King reached Paris in September and threw off his fever; but the effects remained to enfeeble his frame, as they did in many others of the army.

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Though thus prevented of its fruits, the issue of the war was decided, and the danger of the coalition altogether dispersed. Raymond of Toulouse was barely able to hold his ground in Languedoc against the Counts of Brittany and La Marche assisted by his many neighbouring enemies, who took the opportunity to pay off old grudges, and threatened to revive the terrors of a holy war, an excuse for which was given by a fresh outbreak against priests and friars in some parts of his domain. The King of Aragon, seeing Languedoc doubtful, and his way

into France barred, made no movement, though professing good will; and the other hopes of the confederacy proved vainer still. Henry remained inactive at Bordeaux. A piteous letter to the Emperor, dated in September, describes his misfortunes: "The King of France broke the truce; we made war on him. Hugh, Count of La Marche, and Reginald of Pons betrayed us. Reginald of Pons bade us farewell and, giving us a Judas kiss, went to do the treachery he had planned. When, therefore, we could not remain longer among that false and lying people of Poitou without danger of our body, we crossed into Gascony, where we have dealt with our beloved kinsman, Raymond, Count of Toulouse, Marquis of Provence, about the betterment of our state. We might have many strong friends in Burgundy, were it in the hands of another than the Duke."

He had replenished his coffers by the levy of a scutage in England, and emptied them on the needy and boastful race of Gascons. He was a laughing-stock to them and a reproach to his own followers. The Earl of Winchester and some others refused to stay, and asked a safe-conduct through France, which Louis granted, saying that he gladly let them go in the hope that they would never come back. Richard of Cornwall soon followed, with the Earl Marshal and the Earl of Hereford, disgusted by Henry's idleness and extravagance and entire subservience to the self-interested counsels of foreign flatterers. His treasures being spent, he ran into debt, pledging his own credit and that of Simon of Montfort and William Longsword, who stayed with him, though

chafing and neglected. Even the Gascons, by whom he was governed, began to voice their contempt; and tales of his folly spread to the French Court and were repeated to the King as matter of congratulation. "Let be, let be," said Louis. "Do not mock him. His prayers and almsgivings shall deliver him from danger and reproach."

At the end of the autumn the Count of Toulouse submitted, using the mediation of the Queen-mother, his cousin, who was always well-disposed towards him. No more than submission was required; for peace was the interest of the kingdom; nor was it desirable to devastate or embitter a province, the succession of which was assured to the royal family. Raymond gave pledges of good faith, and met the King in January at Lorris, where a treaty was made ratifying the provisions of Meaux, the Count ceding the town of Narbonne and several castles in addition. Later in the same year he proceeded to Rome, and was reconciled to the Apostolic See upon Louis's intercession, occupying himself thereafter in an attempt to mediate between the Church and the Emperor.

Henry wrote again to the Emperor in January, lamenting this new desertion of his beloved kinsman. Nevertheless he was determined, he said, to stay in Gascony in order to oppress his enemies and reform his affairs. It would, however, have been desperate to renew the war against France, abandoned by his allies: the truce was confirmed and defined in April, to run for five years from that date. The French retained

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all they had conquered; while Henry was obliged to evacuate some places which he had retaken after their retreat by the help of his Gascons, and to pay a thousand pounds yearly while the truce lasted.

In spite of this conclusion, war continued on the high seas some months longer, Peter of Brittany having returned to his trade of a privateer, which he followed to great profit against merchants trading between England and Gascony, until Louis by a threat of outlawry compelled him to desist. The English King lingered at Bordeaux till October, when at last he tore himself away from the importunate affection which his purse rather than his person had kindled in his southern subjects, and landed safely at Portsmouth, loaded with debt to the amount of three hundred and fifty thousand marks.

"From this time," a contemporary writer observes, "the barons of France undertook nothing against their anointed Lord, seeing that God was with him." The issue of the last rebellion, which itself depended chiefly on external aid, and took the shape of foreign rather than of civil war, crowned the struggle of three reigns. The monarchy rose superior over the magnates, and all the provinces of France lay in the shadow of its prestige and authority. The King was firmly established in his immediate domain; to which a considerable part of the English possessions had been added, besides further acquisitions. Other extensive territories were being broken to the yoke under the government of princes



SEAL OF FERRAND, COUNT OF FLANDERS.



SEAL OF SAINT LOUIS.



of the blood, and ripening towards union with the central power. The great feudatories had been weakened and taught to recognise a master. Brittany was humbled; Toulouse all but annexed; Champagne dependent on the King's good will. The most formidable of all, the House of Plantagenet, which once had seemed likely to swallow the whole kingdom, was now definitely ranked as a foreign power. It had been repulsed in the attempt to regain its former footing, and held its remaining possessions in Guyenne and Gascony on sufferance, which made them a hostage rather than a menace to France. A further measure was taken towards breaking its influence in the second year of the truce, when Louis enacted in Parliament at Paris that all who held fiefs both in France and England must resign either one or the other. Henry retaliated by depriving Normans and other Frenchmen of their English fiefs, without allowing them the choice; which caused much complaint.

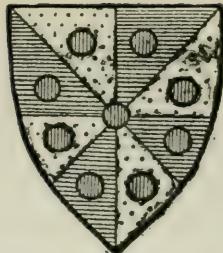
A strict hand was kept over Poitou after the settlement. Hugh of La Marche, in particular, was made sensible of the altered position of affairs; for the turn of events had much damaged his reputation, and let loose enemies acquired in prosperity; while the Count of Poitiers, like his brother Robert, was hot-tempered towards the magnates, inclined to resent their misconduct and disdain their claims of privilege. A year after the truce a knight accused Hugh of treason, and he was summoned to Paris to answer before the King and the Count of Poitiers. The accuser met his denial by throwing down a

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gauntlet and offering to prove his charge on the defendant's body in single combat. The right was allowed by the custom of the age ; but public feeling condemned its exercise by an inferior against a man of advanced years and so high in rank. The Count's eldest son stepped forward, desiring to fight in his father's place ; but Alphonso interfered, declaring that Hugh himself should undergo the combat or be adjudged guilty ; and it was so decided. The great barons, touched in their pride and compassion by the abasement and danger of a leader of their order, pleaded with the King to reverse this judgment, urging the alienation of a powerful family, should the Count fall, and a renewal of trouble in Poitou from their anger and vengeance. Their arguments were effective to save him, the accuser being induced to withdraw his challenge. At the news of this affair the Countess-Queen Isabel fled to the abbey of Fontevraud for sanctuary, fearing that some attempt might be made to punish her also, since many laid the blame of the late rebellion at her door, and an attempt on her part to poison the King was alleged to have been detected during its course.



THE EMPEROR



HENRY, LANDGRAVE OF  
THURINGIA

## CHAPTER VI

### PRELIMINARIES OF THE CRUSADE

1243-1248

M EANWHILE the relations with the Empire continued on a friendly footing. Whatever promises Frederick may have made to the confederates, he never gave them the least assistance, and was so far from resenting the sharp terms in which Louis had demanded the release of the French bishops, that he wrote to him half a year later to explain and justify his action in devastating the neighbourhood of Rome, and to propose a marriage between Conrad his son, King of the Romans, and the King's sister Isabel, desiring, as it seems, to substitute a tie with France for the English connexion which had been broken by the death of the Empress eighteen months before. The negotiation, however, came to nothing.

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The discords of Christendom still burned fiercely. Pope Gregory IX. had died in August, 1241, worn out by them, it was said, and by grief at the Emperor's successes; in addition to this he was afflicted by gravel, was debarred by the war from the baths

of Viterbo, his usual cure, and was nearly a hundred years old. His successor, Celestin IV., died also a fortnight after election. A new choice was prevented during nearly two years by dissensions and private ambition among the seven cardinals, who were all that were left except the two held in prison by the Emperor. At last, pressed by Frederick, who had released his prisoners and hoped by their means to obtain a nomination favourable to his cause; by Louis, who exhorted them to proceed boldly, promising that he would defend the liberties of the Church, and by the French prelates, who threatened to name a Pope for themselves if Peter's chair were left vacant any longer, they gathered at Anagni in June, 1243, and elected Sinnibald, Cardinal of St. Lawrence, a Genoese of the family of Fieschi, who took the style of Innocent, being the fourth of that name.

This choice was a heavy blow to the Emperor; for the new Pope took up the quarrel of the Church in a stubborn, single-minded temper, inflexible of purpose and flinching from no extremity. His first act was to renew the anathema pronounced by Gregory. Negotiations for peace, in which the King of France took great concern, were set on foot through the Count of Toulouse and others, and seemed at first to be leading to a settlement. But neither party trusted the other, while the Pope demanded an absolute submission, which Frederick was not brought low enough to endure. All ended in fresh recriminations; and Innocent prepared far-reaching plans against his enemy, devising another

general Council for his condemnation. He created ten cardinals to support and assist his labours, and sent nuncios through Europe to raise money from the Churches by all possible means of subsidy, gift, or traffic. Finding Rome and Italy, from the neighbourhood of the Imperial armies, too perilous a base of action, he resolved to migrate beyond the Alps. The design was well and secretly conceived to avoid interception. Still keeping up the pretence of negotiation, he came to Sutri; then delivered his refusal of the Emperor's terms; and having heard, as he said, that an attempt to kidnap him was in view, took horse suddenly by night and fled at breakneck speed with two attendants to Civita Vecchia. By an incredible chance, had it not been arranged, twenty-three fighting galleys of the Genoese, his countrymen, commanded by the admiral of the State, were there to meet him. He reached Genoa safely through a storm. The Emperor dissembled his annoyance under a jest: "The wicked flee when no man pursueth," he said when the news came; but he felt the stroke, and caused the approaches to Genoa to be closely guarded, especially on the side of France.

Nevertheless, a few months afterwards, Innocent reached Asti by a sudden march, escorted by the Genoese, and made as if to winter there; but soon starting again by stealth, and travelling night and day over dangerous roads, eluded the Imperial ambuscades, and passed through the states of the Count of Savoy, his supporter, to the city of Lyons, where he established himself about the middle of December. The place was a fief of the

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Empire, governed by its Archbishop, and from its position moderately secure.

The Pope would have preferred a refuge in France. In the autumn of the same year the Cistercian order held its customary general chapter at Cisteaux. The King had declared his purpose of attending, in order to ask the prayers of the assembly ; he came with his brothers and the Duke of Burgundy and the Queen-mother, on whom the Pope had conferred the unusual privilege of entering a house of monks. As he approached the monastery the five hundred abbots of the order came running to meet him, and led the royal company into the chapter-house, where, when they were seated, all fell on their knees round the King, beseeching him with tears to defend the father and shepherd of the Church against Satan's son, the Emperor, and to afford him shelter in the kingdom, if necessity came. They did this complying with an epistle from Innocent. Louis, not to be taken by surprise, answered kindly, but in guarded terms, that he would defend the Church against the Emperor, as far as he honourably could ; and would receive the Pope, if such was the advice of his barons.

Papal envoys formally repeated the request before the King in council, asking that the Holy Father might be allowed to reside at Rheims, of which the Archbishop was just dead. But the barons, not desiring to make France the nest of so troublesome and expensive a visitor, in which he might hatch mischief and devour their substance, refused with one voice to consent. Innocent applied to England also and to Aragon for an asylum, and was denied by



INNOCENT IV.

FROM A PAINTING IN THE BASILICA OF ST. PAUL'S, ROME.



both ; though the English King was only stopped from admitting him by the protests of his council. His cause was unpopular through the extortions of his agents, in France not less than elsewhere, with clergy as well as with laymen. It is related that a priest of Paris, when the anathema against Frederick was ordered to be published in the churches, cursed with book and bell the party who was wrong in the quarrel, saying that he could not tell whether it was Pope or Emperor.

In Advent Louis was attacked by a return of his Poitevin sickness, which took the form of dysentery added to a fierce fever. It seemed impossible that he could long sustain the force of the malady. Barons and prelates gathered round his bed at Pontoise, and prayers and processions were made in the churches of Paris. He called his officers to him, thanked them for their services, and exhorted them to obey God. Growing worse, he lay for a long time unconscious, none knowing if he still lived. A report of his imminent death ran through the country and filled it with mourning ; the people thronged the churches with supplications and offerings for his safety, calling him a just and peaceful prince. The sacred relics were brought to his bedside, and his mother, as she stood sobbing and praying, laid the Cross and the Crown of Thorns on his body, with a vow that if her son were restored he should visit Christ's Sepulchre and give thanks in the land consecrated by his Redeemer's blood. As she and all around continued in prayer, the King, groaning and moving his arms, awoke from the

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trance, and spoke in a broken and hollow voice: "The Dayspring from on high hath visited me, and hath lifted me up out of the shadow of death."

When he was restored a little he called for the Bishop of Paris, and bade him fix the cross of the oversea passage on his shoulder. The Bishop besought a little delay; and both Queens, overcome with grief and remorse, fell on their knees, entreating him not to take the irrevocable step till his strength returned. But Louis insisted that he would neither eat nor drink till he had received the cross; the Bishop affixed it, shedding tears. From that time, though not at once out of danger, he returned slowly to health. Blanche repented bitterly of her rash vow, which had received so sudden effect, and those who loved the King best shared her misgivings. But Louis himself showed nothing but joy at the prospect of his pilgrimage.

News came soon which seemed to reveal God's hand in the matter. Through the quarrels of the Sultans of Egypt and Damascus, and by alliance with the latter, the Christians of the East had been established in full possession of the Holy City. The enjoyment was short; to avenge himself and annoy his enemies the Sultan of Egypt invited the Khorasmians to invade Palestine. This warlike horde of Turcoman adventurers was wandering on the north-eastern confines of Syria, having been driven from their original home by a reflux of Tartar conquest: they readily accepted his pay and promises, and entered the country, a vast host of horsemen. The fortifications of Jerusalem had not

been rebuilt since the time of Saladin, and the Christians determined to fly to the strong cities of the coast. The greater part of the inhabitants started on the march, men, women, and children, leaving a few behind. Advanced parties of the Khorasmians occupied the town without difficulty, and, disappointed of their prey, conceived a plan to lure it back : they hung out over the ruined walls Christian banners and ensigns which they found in the place. Some who had stayed in hiding among the hills recognised the blazons, and believing that the invaders had been repulsed sent swift messengers to recall their countrymen, now half-way to Joppa. The wiser heads, expecting a snare, continued the march ; but the multitude could not be restrained from rushing back to their homes. The Turcomans, who had retired meanwhile, immediately surrounded the city and entered it by assault, killing without respect of age or sex. Some fled to the caves and mountains, only to be butchered miserably by the Moslem peasantry, nominally their allies. Out of above seven thousand not three hundred escaped death or slavery. The altars were destroyed and the Holy Places defiled, which the Saracens had always respected ; the marble pillars standing at the entrance of our Lord's Sepulchre were sent to adorn the tomb of Mahomet at Medina. Since that unhappy day Jerusalem has never been in the hands of the Christians.

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The invaders advanced towards the sea, being joined by an army from Egypt. They were encountered near Gaza, the 18th of October, 1244, by

the Christian forces with which were succours from the Sultan of Damascus. The Saracen allies fled at the first shock; but the Christians, who had been enraged to extremity by the savage excesses of the Infidels, fought with desperate valour, were overwhelmed by tenfold numbers, and almost annihilated. Six hundred knights of the Orders were engaged; thirty-three Templars, twenty-three Hospitallers, and three Teutonic were all that escaped. The Preceptor of the Teutonic Order, the Bishop of Saint George, and many barons of Palestine died on the field. The Archbishop of Tyre, the Grand Masters of the Temple and the Hospital, were taken alive. After this defeat, the remaining strength of the Christians was cooped closely in a few fortified towns, expecting a siege every day. They could see the roving Turcoman bands from the battlements of Acre, where most were gathered, and whence they wrote lamentable letters to the Western princes relating the misfortunes of their state and appealing for instant aid.

The tidings had not arrived except in rumour at the time of the King's sickness; but some declared that he had seen in his trance a vision of the slaughter at Gaza. It is not affirmed, however, by any trustworthy authority that Louis ever spoke of this, and the tale may be imputed to the imagination of an age greedy of coincidence and miracle. But it is not doubtful that he afterwards believed his vow to have been divinely inspired for the restoration of the Christian fortunes in their hour of greatest need. This conviction sustained him against the many



SAINT LOUIS PRAYING BEFORE A SHRINE.

FROM A BAS-RELIEF OF THE THIRTEENTH-CENTURY IN THE CATHEDRAL OF NOTRE DAME.



discouragements which surrounded the inception of his undertaking. By this time, the fever of the cross was beginning to weaken in men's blood. Reasoning on the subject fought with zeal, and self-interest sapped devotion, though habit and prejudice remained powerful allies. The King's path was beset by obstacles of policy, which his counsellors had more prudence to observe and exaggerate than enthusiasm to override. And the same arguments which did not deter him were effective to drag back others, so that the greater share of burden and labour fell on his shoulders. This was so in the kingdom ; and there was no more eagerness outside. The King of England, though pious, said that he had too many enemies to take the cross. The Emperor professed good will and a desire to help, but gave little besides. The Pope blessed the enterprise, but with mind and heart running on his own affairs, and valued one soldier or one bezant brought against the Emperor more than ten spent in combating the Infidel.

In January, 1245, Innocent sent out circular letters of summons to a general Council, naming three subjects to be treated ; the troubles of the East, the danger from the Tartars, and the dispute of the Church with Frederick, mentioning last the true cause of assembly. The Council met at Lyons in June ; the Patriarchs of Constantinople, Antioch, and Aquileia attended, and a hundred and forty-four prelates, few from Germany ; also the Emperor Baldwin, the Counts of Toulouse and Provence, and proctors from the Kings of France and England.

Thaddeus of Suessa, a scholar, statesman and soldier of high repute, appeared on the part of the Emperor. He defended his master eloquently and well; but the Pope had the Council well in hand, and would listen to no excuse or suggestion of compromise. A flood of invective was poured on Frederick's private and public character, and a fortnight given for him to appear in person and answer the charges; but this was done with reluctance and at the pressing instance of the French and English proctors. He refused to come; and Thaddeus, seeing how strongly the current ran, entered a formal protest, appealing to a future Pope and a more general Council. Judgment and doom followed: Frederick's crimes were recited at length, his subjects absolved from their obedience, the Empire declared vacant,

**A.D.** and the kingdom of Sicily put at the Pope's disposal. The unqualified terms of the sentence, as it was read in full Council, filled all with amazement and trembling; the Imperial envoys withdrew, prophesying sorrow and disaster; and the ambassadors of secular princes heard with uneasiness the absolute power to bind and to loose, to pull down and set up, which was claimed by the Apostolic See. The same day the Pope and all the Cardinals and Bishops cursed the Emperor solemnly in the church of St. James, reversing and extinguishing their tapers as a symbol of his end.

The work of the Council was done with the condemnation; but, before separating, letters were issued against the Tartars, regulations drawn up for the propagation and government of the crusade, and

decrees made about ecclesiastical lawsuits and the nature and use of excommunication and other matters concerning the Church.

When Frederick heard what had happened, he fell into ungovernable rage, and calling for the coffer containing his crowns set one on his head, and swore he would not yield it to Pope or Council without a bloody struggle. Afterwards he wrote circular letters denying the Council's authority and title to be called general, and inveighing against the aggressions and extortions of Rome. To the French he promised that, if peace were made, he or Conrad his son would make the passage, with the King or in his stead ; if not, he would still give the crusaders all help by land and sea, with ships and supplies, as far as his business and occasions allowed. He reiterated the common danger of monarchs from the ambitious pretensions of the Apostolic See, which none could expect to withstand, were it inflated with the triumph and prestige of the Emperor's overthrow. The argument commended itself to secular jealousy ; nevertheless his cause received much damage from the judgment of the Council, which seemed to mark him formally as enemy of the whole Church, condemned on account of spiritual, no less than of temporal errors.

The King held a Parliament at Paris in October on the subject of his crusade. He had requested a special Legate from the Pope, who commissioned Odo of Château-Roux, Cardinal of A.D.  
1245 Tusculum, an upright and prudent priest ; moved by his exhortations and the King's on this

occasion many great persons took the cross : Robert of Artois, Peter of Brittany and his son John, Hugh of La Marche, the Dukes of Burgundy and Brabant, the Counts of Saint Paul, Bar, and Dreux, Raoul of Coucy, and, among prelates, the Archbishops of Rheims, Sens, and Bourges, the Bishops of Beauvais, Laon, and Orleans. Meanwhile, as his voyage must be delayed by the necessity for long preparation, Louis joined with Templars and Hospitallers to send money and men to the succour of Palestine. It was ordained in the Parliament that a truce of five years should be imposed on private wars throughout the realm, lest the crusade might be hindered ; and that all who took the vow should be given three years' respite from their debts ; an enactment much complained of and cast up against the King by the moneyed class of citizens, who held mortgages on many noble and knightly fiefs.

At the end of November, Louis met the Pope at Cluny, having invited him thither to a conference. So spacious was the abbey that it afforded lodging at this time to the King, his mother, brother, and sister, to the Emperor of the East, the Princes of Aragon and Castile, the Duke of Burgundy and a numerous train of barons, as well as to the Pope, two Patriarchs, and twelve Cardinals, without disturbing the monks from their usual dwelling. Louis and Blanche conferred with Innocent for seven days in secret, no other person being present. The crusade and the reconciliation of the Emperor were conjectured to be the subject of their deliberation. No result appeared but the arrangement of a further

conference in the following year, in which it was hoped that Frederick would take part.

From Cluny the King visited his lately acquired county of Macon, and returned to Paris for Christmas. He was accustomed to give cloaks to the knights of his household at this season, and it is related that he secretly caused a cross to be embroidered in gold on each garment. The household, being summoned as usual to rise before dawn and attend the King to mass, put on their new cloaks in the dark. When it grew light, and they saw the cross on one another's shoulders, at first they were filled with wonder and mirth, then understood the pious trick. Touched with love and devotion they were ashamed to lay the cross aside, and regarding the King, says the chronicler, with mingled laughter and tears, called him a hunter of pilgrims and a new fisher of men.

The House of France received in this year a further addition of fortune. Raymond Bérenger, dying in August, bequeathed his domains to his remaining daughter, Beatrix; the third, Sanchia, had been married to Richard of Cornwall two years before. A crop of suitors sprang up for the hand of the heiress, who had beauty as well as Provence for her dower. The Count of Toulouse was negotiating the marriage for himself; the King of Aragon sought it for his son; both entered the country and threatened it with their forces. Meanwhile a bolder wooer of humbler rank carried off the lady and held her prisoner in his castle. Her uncles, Boniface, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Philip, Bishop of Valence, who, according to the scandalous

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custom of their family, joined to great ecclesiastical preferment the habits and life of soldiers of fortune, cut down their woods, taxed their clergy, hired mercenaries, and came to defend their niece. They were helped by their elder brother, the Count of Savoy. The King of France, on leaving Cluny, sent five hundred knights from his escort for the same purpose. The Countess dowager and the Regents of Provence desired to marry Beatrix to Charles, youngest brother of Louis; for they had a great respect for the King, and were better satisfied with him than with the English husbands of her sisters. The ravisher was attacked in his stronghold and forced to yield his prize. Toulouse and Aragon withdrew in fear of France. Charles travelled to Provence with a splendid escort, and espoused the young Countess in midwinter; then, returning to France with his bride, was made a knight and received his appanage of Anjou and Maine the next summer.

In January, 1246, the King, on account of his impending voyage, sought a prolongation of the truce with England, which had two more years to run. He is reported to have made secret proposals for its conversion into a regular treaty of peace, offering to surrender his conquests in Aquitaine in return for a final abdication of the claim on Normandy. Henry put these overtures aside, reluctant to renounce his inheritance, and trusting to the chances of the future; but he was willing, he said, to extend the truce for the sake of the crusade, if he were given four castles in Provence, which he claimed in right of his wife. The negotiation stuck on this proviso, and nothing was concluded.

The same month a dispute which had grievously embroiled the northern borders of France was referred to the arbitration of Louis and the Legate Odo. Joan, Countess of Flanders and Hainault, dying childless in 1244, was succeeded by her sister Margaret. This unfortunate princess had been wedded in her youth to Bouchard of Avesnes, a notable soldier, and had by him two sons, John and Baldwin. But Bouchard had been once in religious orders, and had deserted them for arms. This becoming known, the Pope declared the marriage null and void, and the censures of the Church compelled a separation. Some years afterwards, Margaret married William of Dampierre and had three sons, William, Guy, and John. By this time both families were grown up; and the sons of the former bed, supported by their relations, the Counts of Holland and Saint Paul, contested the inheritance of Flanders and Hainault with the family of Dampierre. By strict rule the eldest son of one or the other marriage should have reaped the whole succession; but the arbitrators, with consent of the parties, awarded a division: Flanders to William of Dampierre, and Hainault to John of Avesnes. The quarrel settled by this compromise broke out again, as will be related, to disturb the peace in the King's absence, and was composed a second time by his authority.

In the spring Louis and the Pope had another meeting at Cluny. Innocent was high in fortune; he was just bringing the Archbishops of the Rhine and other German princes to elect a new King of the Romans, the Landgrave

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Henry of Thuringia, the last descendant of Charlemagne in right line, who might, he hoped, enforce the sentence of deposition and dispossess Frederick of the Empire. Moreover his treasury had been filled by the diligence and severity of his travelling legates. Men said that no Pope since Saint Peter had been so rich. He was no more disposed, therefore, by circumstances than he was by character to abate one jot from his pretensions; while the Emperor, on the same considerations, was inclined to go far in concession, and in requesting the King's mediation promised to spend the rest of his life reconquering Palestine, provided his son might be allowed to succeed him in the Empire, and both be fully absolved by the Church.

Innocent rejected the proposal scornfully, saying that Frederick had made many such promises and broken them all, and was not to be dealt with except on complete submission. Louis urged acceptance, or at least negotiation. He pointed out that, next to God, the Emperor had most power to help or hamper the crusade and the general cause of Christendom, from his mastery of the seas and harbours and islands, and his acquaintance and influence in the East. But the Pope was proud and obdurate; and the King took his leave, says the chronicler, indignant to have found so little of the humility he hoped in the servant of the servants of God.

He continued, however, his endeavours after peace, sending the Bishop of Senlis and the Warden of Bayeux to Lyons with further proposals. Innocent's answer, dated in November, shewed no desire for compromise. He had

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sought peace, he said, before the Council of Lyons, but in vain, and had little hope that it could now be obtained. Nevertheless, the Church's bosom was never closed against a returning prodigal ; the Vicar of Christ, like his Master, did not desire the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live, and would receive the Emperor if he came back into the fold ; and, out of special regard for the person of his intercessor, would deal with him as gently as might be without sin against God and the honour of the Church.

His stiff, unrelenting attitude, which Frederick did not fail to heighten and to reproach, alienated many minds from the Apostolic See, particularly on account of the injury which it seemed to offer to the Christian cause in the East. The Egyptian Sultan had a great respect for the Emperor, who had made a treaty with his father, and refused this year to listen to overtures of truce put forward by the Pope and the Templars, unless they gained his support ; but they scouted the notion, and reviled Frederick for his friendship with Infidels. Innocent had no intention of allowing the recovery of Jerusalem to interfere with his designs. While he commanded the Frisians, who had taken vows, to hold themselves ready to join the King of France in his passage, he sent secret despatches to his Legates to suspend the preaching of the crusade in Germany, lest it should interfere with the holy war which he had ordered to be proclaimed against the Emperor.

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The ill success of his mediation did not discour-

age the King from pushing forward the preparation of his voyage. He began to accumulate all kinds of stores and supplies in Cyprus. The Emperor aided,

A.D. writing in November to his justiciaries and  
1246 chamberlains in the kingdom of Sicily, to let horses, arms, and provisions be bought and exported freely by those acting on the French King's behalf. Louis also improved and fortified Aigues Mortes, the only Mediterranean port in his own dominions. The walls remain to-day, but the place is several miles inland, the harbour having been choked by sand in the course of time. He levied a tithe on the revenues of the clergy by leave of the Pope. The towns also paid large contributions, Paris alone furnishing ten thousand pounds.

By custom and papal decree those who assumed the cross were received into the protection of the Church. Some were always found to abuse this advantage, committing crimes of violence and robbery, and evading civil justice under shelter of their temporarily sacred character. Louis sought and obtained the withdrawal of the privilege from those convicted of such offences.

The necessities or the avarice of the Roman court had long opened a bottomless gulf, into which was poured the tribute of many kingdoms, and of France not least. Every device of mediæval taxation was practised to drain the treasures of the Gallican Church into papal coffers. To a regular impost on ecclesiastical revenues, and to aids and subsidies and forfeits levied on every possible occasion, were added the profits of transactions which bore the appearance

of simony. For example, before the Council of Lyons, Odo, Abbot of Saint Denis, procured a nomination from the Pope to the archbishopric of Rouen by a gift of several thousand pounds which he wrung from his abbey. The King, however, upon hearing of it, forced him to repay the money.

About the same time Louis and his barons, assembled in council, despatched to the Pope a long and reasoned remonstrance against his exactions. It is new, they say, and unheard of in previous times that the Roman See should levy for all its needs on the temporalities of the French clergy. Preaching friars are sent through the realm, extorting money from bishops and high abbots with threats of excommunication, so that the successors of the Apostles are taxed like serfs or Jews. The evil has increased since Innocent's arrival at Lyons. His emissaries have become open and shameless in their demands, which hitherto had been covered with a decent veil of secrecy. He has given away to his foreign nominees a host of benefices, even those not yet vacant, contrary to usage and to the canons. The bishops can no longer provide for the learned and honest clergy of their dioceses; and prejudice is done to the King and his nobles, whose relations and friends were accustomed to have preferment in the Church. Strangers and Italians are appointed, who do not reside, but withdraw their revenue out of the realm; thus avoiding the intention of pious founders, who designed their benefactions to support the ministry of God in their native place, and the residue, if any, to be given to the poor; or, if need

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were, to the King's defence. A new grievance has been added lately in the Pope's order to the clergy to supply him with soldiers against his persecutor, who is coming, he says, to attack him. Let him remember the counsel of the Gospel—"If they persecute you in one city, flee into another." The King's ancestors founded and endowed the churches of France; and their temporal possessions are subject to him alone. He will never, while he lives, allow the Church to be yoked with injury, impoverishment, and servitude, through which it is made unable to perform the service of God, and to fulfil the obligations it owes to himself and others: nor the kingdom to be despoiled by the draining of revenues, which, in the last resort, belong to it, and from which the expense of the crusade must in large measure be furnished. "The King loves you sincerely, as you know," the despatch concludes, "and is compassionate to your necessity; but he must guard the liberties and customs entrusted to his keeping. He prays you therefore, his very dear father in Christ, for God's honour and your own, for the removal of scandal, for preserving the devotion of France and its Church, and for the love you bear him, to abstain hereafter from such oppressions, which cannot be borne, and to undo the wrong which already has been done; for many have been suspended or excommunicated on account of these matters."

The appeal had no effect. The Pope insisted on levying a twentieth on the clergy, nominally for the succour of Palestine, at the same time that he

authorised a tenth to be taken by the King; he also demanded a further subsidy for war in Germany against the Emperor. The clergy, squeezed so hard, became grasping in turn, and pressed every ecclesiastical claim and privilege and exemption, replenishing themselves at the expense of their neighbours and suzerains and vassals. The patience of France was exhausted. Magnates and barons assembled in November of 1246 to take measures for remedy of the evil. They made and sealed a bond of agreement: that they and their heirs would aid one another, and their vassals, and all who joined them, to pursue and defend their right against clerics; that the Duke of Burgundy, Count Peter of Brittany, the Count of Angoulême,\* and the Count of Saint Paul should be a board to receive complaints and decide what to do to assist in each case; that every baron should contribute for the purposes of the association the hundredth part of his revenues year by year, to be delivered as the four delegates, or any two of them, should direct.

They also published a manifesto, dwelling in bitter terms on the avarice and arrogance of the Church, and declaring that they would curtail by sharp punishment and forfeiture the abuses and encroachment of ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and would reduce the clergy, who had grown fat on the spoils of laymen, to primitive poverty; in which wholesome and holy state they might live and meditate and display miracles, now so long ceased, for the benefit and salvation of the working part of the world. The latter

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\* He was eldest son of Hugh, Count of La Marche.

phrases of their proclamation were thought to reveal the hand of the Emperor; for he had often held the same language. But resentment of like grievances may have vented itself without collusion in a similar strain.

The Pope received the news with surprise and anger, having little expected the open revolt of a devout and generous nation. His first impulse was to threaten and thunder. He wrote passionately to

A.D.      the French prelates assembled at Paris in the  
1247      beginning of next year, exhorting them to  
                show a bold front against the barons, who  
                were perverted from the piety of their ancestors to  
                become persecutors and enslavers of the Church.  
                He paraded the bull of Honorius, and ordered the  
                Legate to excommunicate all the members of the  
                league, and all who joined or aided or abetted them,  
                or contributed money, or took part in carrying out  
                their judgments.

His message was coldly received; for the prelates and native clergy of France, no less than the barons, felt a great part of the oppressions and evils alleged, being themselves sufferers in the first place, while the sole benefit was reaped by the papal court and its creatures and emissaries, mostly Italian monks. Deputies from the episcopal order, the chapters, and the body of inferior clergy, accompanied by a royal envoy, waited upon Innocent in May, only to formulate a list of grievances imposed upon France by the Apostolic See: Firstly, the usurpation of judgments. Secondly, the authority given to Templars and Hospitallers and other unattached monks dependent on

Rome, who wandered through the kingdom, suspending priests and even the higher clergy, and laying excommunication and interdict on both cleric and lay. Thirdly, the benefices and pensions bestowed out of the French Church on Italians and other strangers. Fourthly and fifthly, the intolerable subsidies levied in the name of assistance to the Latin Empire and the Roman Church. Sixthly, the commissioning of private legates and nuncios to exact money throughout the realm.

Innocent answered, denying or lessening some grievances and promising redress of others; but did not satisfy the deputies, who went away angry. He had then to receive the envoys of the barons' league, a prospect which gave him no pleasure. For their tone was high and unsubmitting; and the King himself had adhered to them openly and affixed his seal to their bond, and gave earnest of his policy by forbidding the French prelates, on pain of forfeiting their lands, to comply with the requisitions of a fresh horde of Franciscan and Dominican friars which the Pope had let loose.

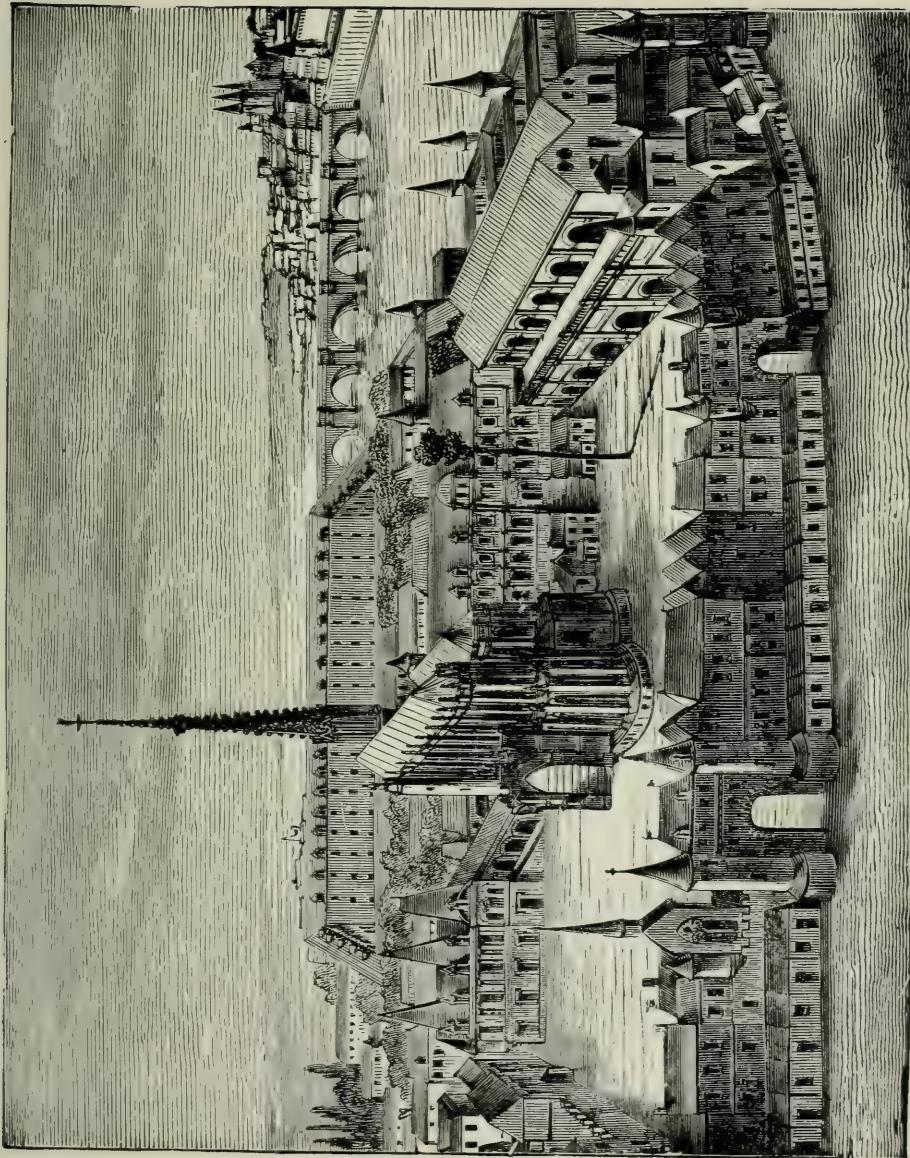
Many Cardinals began to fear the heat and burden of the day; to suggest reconciliation with the Emperor, and say that in deposing him the Council had been too hasty and inconsiderate. Innocent was subject to no such weak mood. But to fulminate against France was idle. For the bolts of the Church, though dreaded, were mostly of moral power, and lost their force and effect unless the use was approved, or at least tolerated, by the general conscience. That being hostile, they were unequal weapons

against forfeiture, imprisonment, and the other means of coercion which belong to secular rulers. He was compelled, therefore, to temporise ; to yield in some particulars ; and to detach individuals from the league by giving them benefices for their kinsmen and other favours. In this way the sore was skinned over, but not healed ; it rankled underneath, and broke out from time to time into fresh inflammation.

Louis called a Parliament at Paris in mid-Lent to settle the affairs of the kingdom, in which he declared his resolution to start within a year from the A.D. coming Nativity of Saint John Baptist, unless hindered by some unforeseen and unavoidable accident. He took a solemn public oath to that effect, as did all the crusaders, and caused the barons to swear fealty to his infant son, in case any mishap should arrive. He named his mother to be Regent and Governess of the realm during his absence.

A curious incident which happened during the session of this Parliament has been related by an eye-witness. Coming out of chapel one day, the King found three corpses laid out on the steps of the courtyard, and a prisoner guarded by men-at-arms. Inquiring of the Provost of Paris what was the matter, he was told that the dead men were three of his sergeants, who used to rob people in unfrequented streets. Last night they attacked and stripped a clerk, who was the prisoner. He ran to his lodgings, fetched his crossbow and sword, overtook the robbers, and, bidding them stand, shot one

THE PALACE AND THE SAINTE CHAPELLE IN PARIS IN THE SIXTEENTH-CENTURY.





through the heart. The other two fled; but the clerk pursued and cut off the leg of one as he was climbing through the hedge of a garden; afterwards he caught the other, just escaping into a strange house, and split his head in two with a single blow of his sword. Then, calling the neighbours to witness what he had done, he went to the King's prison and gave himself up. "And I have brought him here, Sire," ended the Provost, "that you may do your will on him." The King regarded the prisoner. "Sir Clerk," said he, "your prowess is wasted in a priest. I will give you my wages, and you shall come with me oversea." Then turning to the bystanders he added: "And by this I would have you see that I wish my people to know that I will not uphold them in any wickedness." The crowd applauded with shouts, desiring the King's long life and safe return.

Later in the year, wishing to clear his conscience of other matters before undertaking the holy war, Louis ordered his bailiffs throughout the country to proclaim by crier that if any man had been treated unjustly by royal officers in the way of taxation or requisition, he should make complaint and adduce proof, when right would be done. He despatched also a number of friars to all parts, to inquire if the people anywhere suffered wrong from his seneschals or others in authority, with a view to giving redress. About the same time the Viscount of Beziers made a treaty with the King, formally renouncing the territories in Languedoc which, having been conquered from his father, had passed to the Crown.

Richard of Cornwall, visiting France, endeavoured to profit by the occasion, urging that since restitution was offered to all, the lost provinces also should be restored to England. The barons of the council scoffed at the thought, answering, with especial reference to Normandy, that an undisturbed possession of forty years could not be overridden by a claim which had never, during that time, been enforced. But Richard's arguments troubled Louis, until he was satisfied by the Norman bishops that his right was superior to that of the English King, who had been deprived by the regular judgment of his peers.

Many English took vows this year, with the intention of accompanying the crusade; among whom were the Bishop of Worcester and William of Salisbury. Haco, King of Norway, also having put on the cross, was invited by Louis to join his expedition, but declined, saying that his people would certainly quarrel with the French, as both nations were haughty and headstrong in temper. He contented himself with obtaining letters from the King, bidding the coasts of France assist his voyage, which was never begun.

Meanwhile, as Pope and Emperor could not be reconciled, Louis kept on friendly terms with both, favouring each side in the maintenance of its position,

**A.D.**      *but not in aggression upon the other.*  
**1247**      He wrote to the Emperor in February on  
                  the subject of his crusade. The style of the  
despatch is significant; for it seems to go beyond  
the ordinary forms of compliment and honour, at a

time when the Pope was obstinate to insist on Frederick's deposition, and refused to allow his royal or imperial titles. It is prefaced, "To his most excellent and very dear friend, Frederick, by the grace of God illustrious and ever august Emperor of the Romans, King of Jerusalem and of Sicily, Louis, by the same grace King of the French, greeting and sincere love." The Emperor is thanked for facilities given to draw supplies from his dominions, and is assured that he need have no anxiety that the rights of the kingdom of Jerusalem will not be guarded in respect of any conquests made by the Christians. It is promised that the privileges of export, which he has granted to the crusaders, shall not be abused to furnish his enemies, if the King can prevent it. As regards renewal of the treaty between France and the Empire, the bearer of the letter is entrusted with a secret verbal answer.

Shortly after this, Frederick, who had for long been standing on his defence, found himself able to resume the attack, the face of his fortunes having been changed for the better by a victory of Conrad in Germany over Henry of Thuringia, who died immediately afterwards. The Emperor emerged from Southern Italy with a numerous army, declaring his intention to march to Lyons, and, having justified himself of the charges on which he had been condemned, to confer with his adherents in those parts and return honourably into Germany. Innocent and the Cardinals were filled with alarm, and hastened to stir up trouble in Lombardy. Louis on his part, assembling a strong force, prepared to go to Lyons,



accompanied by the Queen-mother, to take share in the meeting, lest the Holy Father should be overborne by violence and arms. But Frederick was recalled from the foot of the mountains by the revolt of Parma, which burst out behind him, fomented by papal subsidies; and Innocent, who desired to see neither King nor Emperor with an army at their back, sent letters to Louis and Blanche, effusive of commendation and thanks, and begging them not to come until he summoned. Meanwhile he turned their good will to account by writing to his partisans that Louis had gathered a great army in order to facilitate the election of a new king of the Romans; for that was the chief object of papal policy at the moment. It was attained in the

A.D. autumn, William, Count of Holland, being  
1247 elected by the German princes, who continued to maintain the war against Conrad, while Frederick strove with but moderate fortune to crush the Lombard rebels.

As the time of the King's passage approached, a great fleet of ships was fitted and provisioned in the harbour of Aigues Mortes. Two attempts were made at the last to shake his purpose,—the first by his mother and the aged Bishop of Paris, supported by many barons. They represented the unquiet state of Europe and the peril of the realm during his absence. Blanche, who trembled lest her son's enfeebled health should fail beneath the voyage and campaign, added entreaty to counsel, begging him, by the love and obedience he owed her, at least not to pass the seas himself, though he sent his forces.

His vows were not binding, they urged ; and the Pope would give dispensation, for they were taken in the height of fever, when he was not master of his mind. Louis appeared to be moved : " You pretend that I took the cross in delirium," said he. " Well, then, I do as you wish : Lord Bishop, I return it to you," and tore the sacred sign from his shoulder. They began to congratulate themselves till he spoke again. " I am not delirious now at any rate. Give me back my cross. God knows, food shall not enter my mouth till I am marked with it anew." All felt that further argument was useless against such resolution. " It is the finger of God," they said.

The other temptation came from the Pope, who desired to keep a powerful protector at hand, in case the Emperor's arms should prevail too far. He begged the King to defer his voyage until it was seen how God would deal with Frederick; adding insidiously that he need not travel oversea to fight for the Faith, since there were many heretics in Italy. " But he laboured in vain," writes a monk of his court, " for he could not divert the King from his desire of crossing."

In the first half of the year Louis settled his outstanding affairs, an example followed by the other crusaders. He made large donations to religious houses in return for their prayers : he also founded and endowed, jointly with his mother, a Cistercian nunnery at Melun in the name of Our Lady of the Lily. On the Friday after Pentecost he received the oriflamme of France and the pilgrim's staff and wallet

A.D.

1248

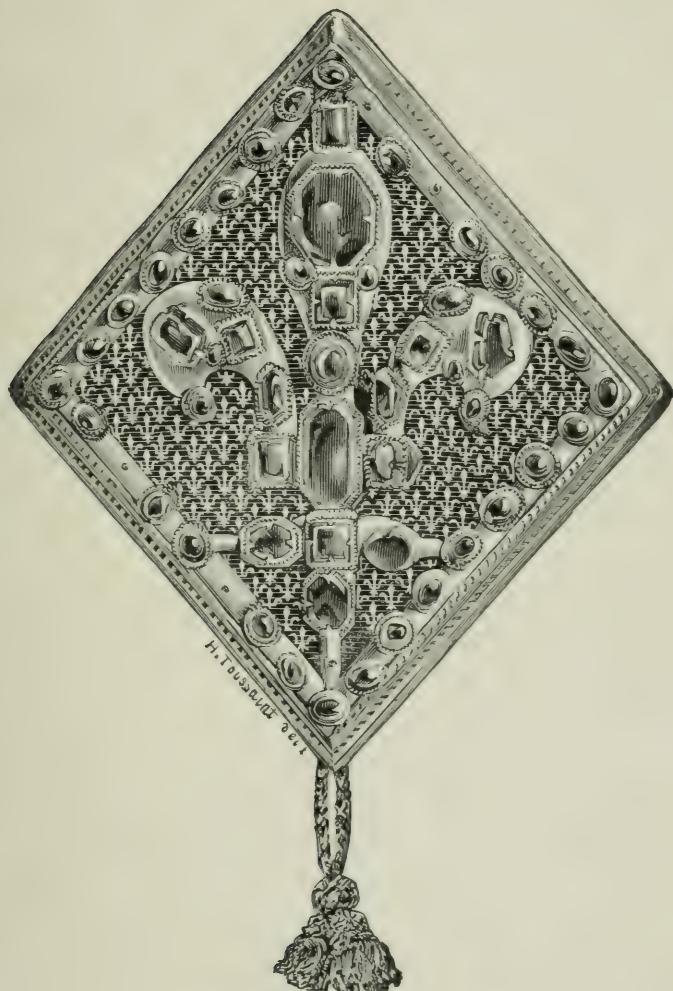
June

12th

from the hands of the Legate Odo, in the church of Saint Denis, and thence returning to Notre Dame heard mass; after which he left Paris, not with military pomp, but barefooted, in pilgrim's habit, and came, accompanied by a vast multitude, to the abbey of Saint Anthony outside the city. An eye-witness, an Italian monk, has described the scene. The King, he says, was thin and haggard, rather tall, with the face of an angel. He seemed more like a monk than a soldier. Many of the French monks wept, crowding to see him like women. He sat in the dust on the ground, while his brothers looked about for benches and stools.

After commanding himself to the prayers of the abbey, and taking leave of the people, who flocked after him, he mounted horse and rode to Corbeil, the first stage of his journey. There he formally handed over to his mother the government of the realm with all its powers and prerogatives. Blanche accompanied him some further distance, and on parting was agonised with grief, foreboding that they would not meet again. "I had rather be cut in two," she cried in her sorrow; "for you have been the best son to me that ever mother had."

The King proceeded through Burgundy to Lyons, where he visited the Pope, whom he implored to relax his severity towards Frederick, if for no other reason, at least for the help and advancement of the crusade. But Innocent shewed a stern, forbidding face to his personal entreaties, and answered afterwards formally in writing, that, though desiring peace,



GOLD CLASP OF SAINT LOUIS.



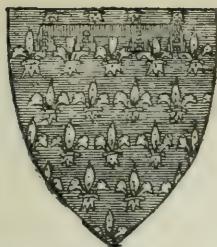
July,  
A.D.  
1248

he would never admit any overtures which did not most fully vindicate the honour of the Church, and provide for the safety of those who had adhered to her party. He added that he was fixed to accept no treaty which did not absolutely exclude Frederick and all his family from the Imperial throne. Louis abandoned his mediation sadly, and dismissed the ambassadors whom the Emperor, though himself distrusting all hope of peace, had sent at his request. He declared that the fault would be the Pope's if impediment came to the crusade, and begged him to guard France as the apple of his eye and the bulwark of Christendom. Innocent promised willingly to defend it with all his might against Frederick or the English King, should either attack, and to send a special nuncio to the latter forbidding him to commit any act of hostility during the crusade ; in which he was as good as his word. Louis then confessed himself to the Pope, and having received absolution and blessing continued his journey down the Rhone.

On the way he came to the castle of Roche de Glui, the stronghold of a robber lord called Roger, who barred the passage of the river and plundered pilgrims and merchants. This he besieged, took, and dismantled, but restored it to the owner, on condition of levying no more unjust tolls. At Avignon there was a brawl between crusaders and citizens, who, enraged by reproaches of heresy cast in their teeth, and remembering old quarrels, set on and slew a number of soldiers in the narrow streets. Certain barons begged the King to permit the town to be

sacked, reminding him of the obstinate and deadly resistance made against his father. But he checked their anger, refusing to mix a private revenge with his holy enterprise.

Reaching Aigues Mortes he embarked on the morrow of Saint Bartholomew, together with the Queen, who refused to stay behind, his brothers of Artois and Anjou, the Legate, **August 25th** and the flower of his army. They filled thirty-eight great ships, besides those which carried servants, horses, and provisions. Some thousands of less efficient troops were left for want of transport. After two days, the wind blowing fair, the fleet set sail for Cyprus, where the King had named the rendezvous of his forces.



ROBERT, COUNT OF ARTOIS



WILLIAM LONGSWORD

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CRUSADE IN EGYPT

1248-1250

AT this time the Mohammedan was not more united than the Christian world. The empire of Saladin had not been preserved by his successors: his dominions were divided among different branches of his family, who spent their strength in mutual war and aggression. The principal stem, in virtue of possessions but not of birth, ruled at Cairo and disputed Syria with their kinsmen of Damascus and Aleppo. The present Sultan of this line, Saleh Nodgemeddin Ayoub, grandnephew of Saladin, was he who invited the aid of the Khorasmians. He had driven his uncle, Saleh Ismael, from Damascus, and carried his conquests as far northwards as Emessa, which his armies were besieging, the place being held for Naser Saladin of Aleppo, Saladin's great-grandson. The news of the approaching crusade induced him to seek a truce and alliance against the common enemy; in this he was backed by the Caliph of Bagdad, the titular head of Islam, who exhorted the princes of his faith to reconcile themselves for the destruction of the Christians.

It had become a maxim of Western policy that the Saracen power should be assailed at its source and Palestine conquered in Egypt. But as such an enterprise demanded resources of the first order, and promised more danger than immediate profit, the weaker crusades of the last thirty years had chosen another mark, and preferred to operate toward strengthening and extending the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. Their endeavours had left that state reduced to the extremity of weakness, deprived of its capital, and dependent on the mercy of the Egyptian Sultan, who could always seize the favourable moment of the retirement of foreign succours to overrun the country with irresistible numbers. The present expedition was designed for the thorough subdual of Egypt, which having been conquered, it would be easy to make and maintain an advantageous settlement in Syria. The immediate distress of Palestine after the battle of Gaza had already been relieved. For the Khorasmians, while they besieged Emessa the following year, were caught in an ambush by the Emir of that place, and twenty-five thousand of them cut to pieces. The rest, deserted by the Egyptians, who found them troublesome allies, soon broke up, and were slaughtered in detail by the people of the country: so that the whole horde was exterminated within three years from its entry. Nor did the Sultan of Egypt in his march to Damascus molest the Christian fortresses of the coast.

A.D.      1245      The French fleet made the harbour of Limesson in Cyprus after one week's voyage, without mishap, save the loss of one vessel on a shoal. Louis would

have wished to sail straight to Egypt ; but the difficulty of assembling and transporting so great an army and its stores in a single convoy compelled him to winter in the island, which afforded a friendly base for gathering his forces and descending on the enemy in full strength. Established there, his numbers were quickly swollen by bodies of crusaders who kept arriving in their own vessels, both from France and from other parts of Europe. The King of Cyprus, who was of the French family of Lusignan, himself took the cross, with most of his nobility.

An immense quantity of supplies had been brought together during two years. The sea-shore was covered with barrels of wine, says the historian of the crusade, stacked on one another to the height of barns ; and the fields with vast ricks of corn, like green mountains, as the top layers sprouted after the rains. Great treasure of money also had been collected, from which many crusading nobles received pensions to support themselves and their followers ; and a store of ploughs, hoes, and other instruments of tillage, as if for a permanent settlement in the country of the Infidels. During the winter further convoys of provisions were procured from the威尼斯人 and the Emperor.

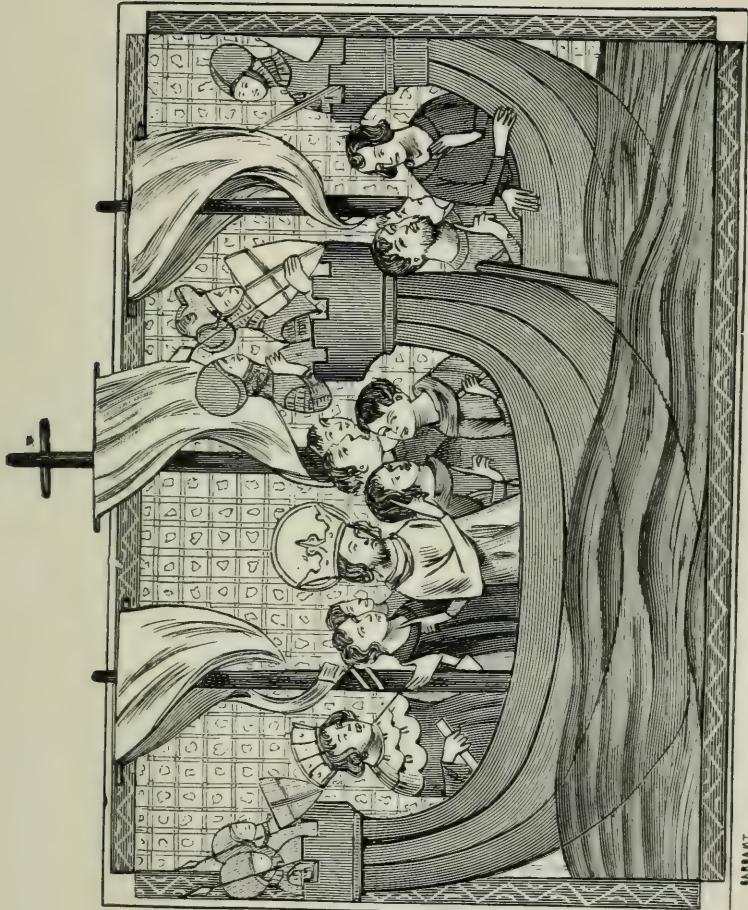
There were evils, however, to set against the advantages of winter quarters. Time was given to the Sultan to become aware of his danger, to patch up a truce with Aleppo, and to withdraw himself and his army from Damascus into Egypt. The change of climate and of living bred sickness among the crusaders, which carried off some considerable persons,

among them the Count of Dreux, Archambaud of Bourbon, and Patrick, Earl of Dunbar, and a number of lower rank. The Queen and the Count of Anjou fell ill, but recovered.

The King was much occupied in settling and restraining the old feuds and mutual jealousy of the Christians, which had hampered so many previous crusades. He was able to reconcile for a time the Templars with the Hospitallers; the Greek with the Latin Church in Cyprus; and, through his envoys, the Prince of Antioch with the King of Armenia. He had to check by force some unruly barons, who planned to seize Genoese ships and convey themselves into Palestine. He sent a mission to Acre, to quell the strife between the Genoese and the Pisans, who were fighting for the town and would not send the ships and sailors required for transport.

At the end of the year a Tartar embassy arrived in  
A.D.      Cyprus. The ambassadors, named Saphadin,  
**1248**      Mephat, David, and Mark, were believed  
to come from the great Khan of Tartary  
himself, grandson of Gengis. In truth they appear  
to have been sent by one of his viceroys, governing  
in Western Persia, who had received the report of  
the French expedition from the alarm of his Moham-  
medan neighbours. The missionary zeal of travel-  
ling monks despatched by the Pope had already  
penetrated the heart of Tartary, and spread some  
dim knowledge of the West among the visited na-  
tions. They found in their wanderings toleration  
and even favour, and in some parts traces and rem-  
nants of ancient Christian worship. From this, wild

DEPARTURE OF SAINT LOUIS FOR THE CRUSADE.





hopes had been drawn of a great conversion. The arrival of the envoys, themselves Nestorian Christians, fitted the mood of the time, and excited high interest and expectation, which they nourished by their boasts. They declared that the Khan had been baptised and was about to besiege Bagdad with a great army, and desired the friendship of the King of France, to prevent the Sultan of Egypt from sending help. The Tartars, they said, had come from a country forty weeks' travel from their present abode, living during the journey in tents and on horseback. They had conquered Prester John, King of India, whose daughter was the Khan's mother and a baptised Christian.

Their stories of the power and friendliness of their masters were confirmed by a letter from the Constable of Armenia to the King of Cyprus about the same time.

"We have seen many cities ruined by them," he wrote, "so rich and great as no man can imagine, some of them three days' journey in compass. We have seen also more than a hundred great mounds, made by the Tartars out of the bones of those they have slain. We have travelled day and night for eight months without reaching the middle of their country. When the last Khan died it took five years for their chiefs and barons to assemble for his son's election. This is the country from which the three Kings came. They are Christians, and we have seen pictures of Christ in their churches, and also of the three Kings offering myrrh and frankincense."

Louis and his council, having heard the envoys,

decided to send an embassy in return to the Khan and to his viceroy, with letters and presents. Three friars were chosen for the mission. The King gave them a tent in the form of a chapel, made of rich scarlet cloth, on the sides of which he caused to be embroidered pictures representing the Annunciation and the Passion of Christ. This was a gift to the Khan, by which it was hoped his belief might be increased and encouraged. The Legate wrote an epistle to the Tartars, exhorting them to hold fast by the orthodox faith, to acknowledge the supremacy of Rome and the vicarship of the Pope, to beware of schism, and to abide by the decrees of the first four general Councils. The embassy was absent two years; its result and return will be narrated in the proper place.

Another negotiation was less favourably viewed, which the Grand Master of the Templars attempted to set on foot with the Sultan of Egypt. The fresh, unbroken spirit of the crusaders abhorred the idea of accommodation with the Infidel, and suspected the loyalty of the military orders, whom long use and intercourse in the East had made careless, and who were held to be governed by private tradition and interest more than by Christian zeal. The suggested treaty was no sooner heard of than rejected, with sharp reproaches against the lukewarmness of the Grand Master.

**A.D.** When spring approached, an immense  
**1249** number of vessels having been procured from every quarter, stores were got on board and all made ready for the voyage. The army em-

barked on Ascension Day, but was held back by unfavourable winds till Friday of the following week. Then the King and Queen entered their ship in the harbour of Limesson. The fleet covered the sea with its sails, as far as eye could reach, being eighteen hundred vessels in all, of which a hundred and twenty were of the largest size. Nearly three thousand knights were on board, with their full equipage of followers, besides a great number of auxiliaries.

Putting out to sea, they were dispersed the next day by a violent storm, and many driven to the Syrian coast. The King and about a quarter of his navy made back into Limesson, where they waited a week for the rest. He was joined there by the Duke of Burgundy and the Prince of Morea, coming from Greece. On Trinity Sunday, the wind having fallen, and most of the fleet come in, they resumed their voyage and held a course for Damietta, a fortified town situated on a mouth of the Nile and reputed the key of Egypt.

Land was sighted on the following Friday. The secret of their destination had been so well kept that many of the crusaders themselves believed they were going to Alexandria; an error which was shared by the Saracens, who sent part of their forces to protect that place. There was some confusion, as the look-out of each vessel in turn reported that they were off Damietta. The sea was calm, and the fleet drew together and stood in to shore. Louis encouraged the crew of his own ship.

“The will of God has sent us here. I am not King of

May  
13th

May  
30th

France ; I am not Holy Church. You, all of you, are King and Church. I am but one man, whose life, if God pleases, will be spent like another's. We are safe in any event ; either we shall conquer and increase God's glory and the honour of France, or we shall fall as martyrs. It is madness to think that the Lord has raised me up in vain."

As they came on, four galleys of the Saracens ran out to reconnoitre, three of which, advancing too far, were surrounded and sunk. The Infidel horsemen lined the shore and the river bank, goodly men to see, in rich armour with gold ornaments, which glittered in the sun. They made a loud and terrible noise with horns and cymbals. A hasty council was assembled on board the King's ship. Some were for waiting till those rejoined whom the storm or the voyage had scattered ; but Louis refused, saying that the enemy would recover heart, and that he would not risk lying in the open roadstead. It was decided to anchor for the night and attack the next day.

Early in the morning the fleet weighed anchor and bore down on the western bank of the Nile. The greater vessels could not come close in, owing to the shelving sands, and the French took to their boats. There was a race to shore. Among the first rowed a pinnace bearing the standard of Saint Denis, followed by another with the King and the Legate, who carried a great processional cross in his arms. No sooner had the oriflamme touched land, than Louis leaped into the water up to his armpits and waded ashore, shield round neck, helm on head, and sword in hand, and would have rushed on the Saracens

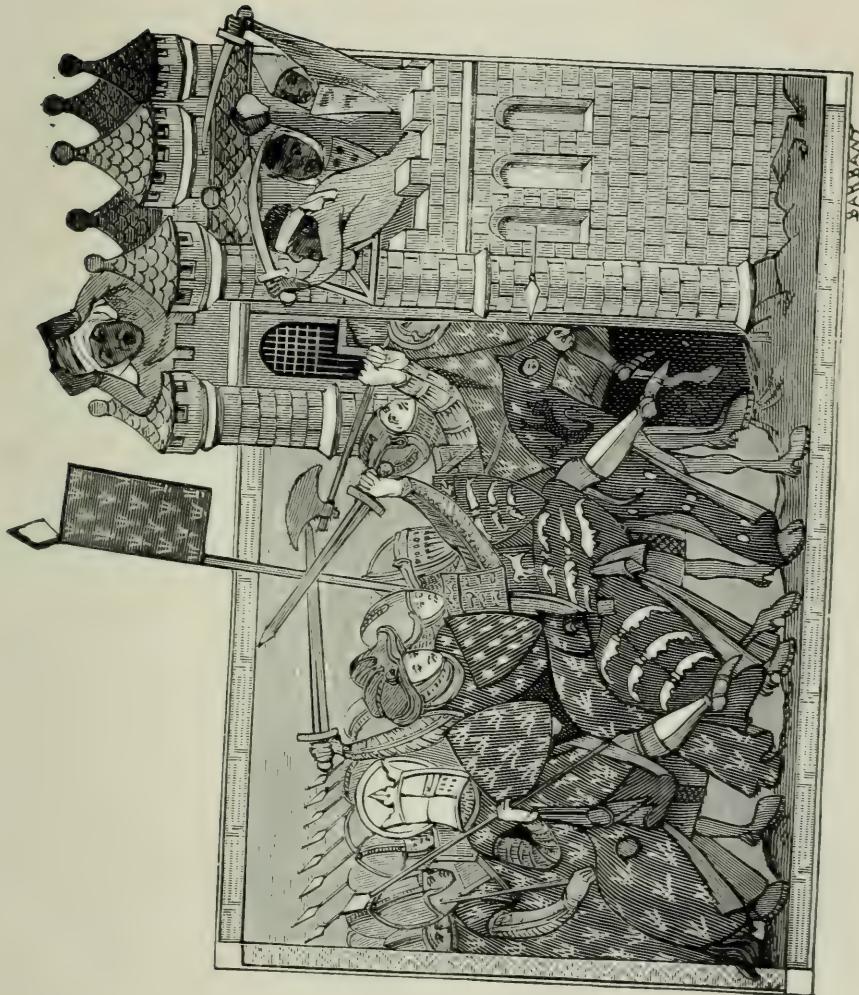
had not his followers held him back. A few had landed already, and others were coming up, plunging into the sea as their boats could not approach. The Count of Jaffa, whose galley was manned by three hundred rowers, drove at full speed right on the beach, with pennons displayed and kettledrums playing.

Fixing the points of their shields in the ground and setting their lances before them like pikes, the Christians formed an impenetrable hedge against the furious assaults of the Saracen cavalry. The enemy gave way, unable to break through and distressed by flights of arrows from the boats. Soon greater numbers gained the shore and, their horses having now been landed, the crusaders mounted and charged. The Infidels did not wait to meet them, but turned and fled across the river into Damietta, breaking a few arches of the bridge behind them. This, and fear of an ambush, restrained the victors from pursuit. While they were fighting, a number of Christian slaves and captives burst out of the unguarded city, and came running to their compatriots with shouts of joy. Being acquainted with the landing-places and the banks of the river, they helped the quick disembarkation of the invaders, which was carried out in the remaining hours of the day ; and the whole French army bivouacked along the shore.

Damietta was strong by art and nature, having a triple circuit of walls, bastioned with towers, on the land side, and a double line of similar fortification facing the river, which itself was a formidable barrier.

The place had stood against the crusaders thirty years before through a five-months' siege, and had been reduced in the end by famine. But this time the Saracens did not attempt to hold it. They were weakened and much disheartened by the battle on the sands; but chiefly a report that the Sultan was dead discouraged them. He had been carried from Damascus in a litter, sick of a grievous ulcer in the thigh, produced, it was said, by a poisoned carpet, and was lying in extremity at Achmon. They had sent him word of the enemy's arrival three times by carrier-pigeon, but got no reply. This confirmed the rumour. The governor, Fakareddin, and the Mamelukes who were the strength of the garrison, either struck with panic, or through fear that their interest might be neglected if a new Government were set up without them, resolved to abandon Damietta; which they did the same night, by land and river, in great disorder, after cutting the throats of most of their prisoners and setting fire to the bazaars. A great part of the Mohammedan population followed them. A few Christian captives who escaped massacre checked the flames, and in the morning sent out messengers to the French, who were watching the town, having seen that something was wrong.

So soon as the truth of their news was ascertained the King ordered a *Te Deum* to be chanted through his army, and the bridge, which was only slightly damaged, to be repaired. The town was occupied at once, the streets cleansed of dead, and the remains of the fire extinguished. All this was done



CAPTURE OF DAMIETTA.

BARRATT



by three o'clock in the afternoon, when the King, the Legate, and the barons rode into Damietta, fasting and in procession. They went to the chief mosque, which had been formerly a Christian church. It was purified and sprinkled with holy water, and there the Legate led the *Te Deum* a second time, while the crusaders followed with their voices, many weeping for joy and zeal. Afterwards mass was solemnly celebrated. Thus Damietta fell to the Christians, with the loss of very few soldiers and only one of importance, the old Count of La Marche, who, smarting under the reproaches and continual dishonour which he had to endure from many, attacked the enemy furiously at landing, like a man careless of life, and received severe wounds, of which he died shortly afterwards.

A vast quantity of food, arms and military engines, clothing, gold and silver vessels, and furniture of all sorts was found in the city. By advice of his council the King claimed all the corn and other victuals for provisioning the army, and bade the rest of the spoil be taken to the quarters of the Legate for distribution. But all that was brought in amounted to no more than the value of six thousand pounds; and though this was divided there were loud murmurs because the stores of food were withheld; for it was the good old custom of the crusades, men said, that when a town was taken one third only of all it contained should go to the King, and two thirds to the pilgrims that followed him.

It was decided to rest at Damietta for the present, because the flood-time of the Nile was approaching,

when the country would become impassable, as former crusaders had found to their cost. Stores were landed from the fleet. The Queen and her ladies, with the Legate, were lodged in the town, which was occupied also by a force of five hundred knights: the King and the rest of the army pitched a camp outside.

Meanwhile the Sultan had rallied from his illness, had hanged the captains of the deserting garrison, and was gathering troops at Mansourah, a strong position on the river bank, lying half-way between Damietta and Cairo. He sent to offer a general battle on the morrow of Saint John Baptist; but Louis replied that he would pursue the quarrel, not on this day or that, but every day, until the Sultan turned from his errors. The Infidels did not venture to attack in force, but watched and harassed the army as occasion offered, cutting off stragglers and foraging parties, or alarming the tents with a sudden swoop. The swiftness and mobility of their light Bedouin horsemen gave them the advantage in this method of fighting over the heavily armed crusaders. The same guerilla warriors crept by night into the camp, waiting till the watch had passed, which they knew by the clank of arms and trampling of horses, and killed men as they slept, carrying off their heads, for each of which the Sultan paid a golden bezant. To prevent this the King ordered the watch to be increased and to go their rounds on foot instead of on horseback. At a later time the camp was fortified with deep ditches guarded by crossbowmen, who kept the hostile cavalry at a distance.

The army swelled in numbers, as the remnant of the voyagers came in and fresh succours arrived from Syria and Greece and Europe. Among others came William Longsword of Salisbury, from England, with two hundred knights. But the stay at Damietta was fruitful of damage to the expedition. Prolonged inaction, which is the severest test even of veteran armies, corrupted the feudal militia like an insidious disease. The bonds of discipline, always loose, were relaxed further, and the camp was filled with disorders and riotous living. The great nobles wasted their substance in outrageous feasting; the royal officers oppressed the merchants of the place, so that the noise of their extortions prevented many from coming; the common soldiers were given up to debauchery, establishing their brothels within a stone's throw of the King's tent. Louis knew of these excesses, and resented but was unable to check them, though some offenders felt the weight of his displeasure after the war. The same weakness of the crusaders appeared in their behaviour toward the enemy. In spite of the strictest prohibition of private excursions and attacks, a troop of Saracens appearing before the lines could always draw a headlong charge of some knight or noble, burning with zeal and eager to illustrate his prowess. "I would not keep a thousand such, since they will not obey my orders," the King was stung into saying, when he heard of the death of Walter Chastillon, who in this way had galloped fully armed from his tent upon an approaching body of Infidels.

Constant quarrels between the French and English

disturbed the camp, as one side complained of greed and selfishness and the other of interference and insult ; the English, according to their national character, having too little regard for the interests, and the French for the feelings, of others. Louis tried to smooth the trouble and to induce his own people to forbear, but in vain ; while his brother of Artois, a desperate hothead, was foremost in the feud. Matters came to a head when William Longsword, having led out a private unauthorised foray and captured a rich caravan bound for Alexandria, was compelled by the Count of Artois to give up his booty. He demanded redress from the King, who answered soothingly, but professed himself unable to do anything in face of his barons. Thereupon William, upbraiding him bitterly, went off with his followers and sailed to Acre.

As autumn drew on, the King, having no news, became anxious about the Count of Poitiers, who was bringing the *arrière-ban* of France. A weekly procession was ordered for his safety, which proved so efficacious that he reached Damietta before  
**A.D.**      the third Saturday, after escaping a great  
**1249**      storm. This was in the end of October. He brought money as well as men, and a supply of corn obtained from the Emperor. The expected reinforcement having arrived, and the flood decreasing, a great council of the army was held to settle the plan of campaign. Peter of Brittany and most of the barons were for attacking Alexandria, where was a fine harbour ; but the Count of Artois advocated a march on Cairo, the capital. “ If we would kill

the serpent," he urged, "we must crush its head." His advice was followed, the more readily as the governor of Cairo, whose brother the Sultan had put to death for his share in abandoning Damietta, was making offers to betray his trust. William Longsword was called back from Acre; the Queen and the Legate were left in Damietta with a strong garrison; and the army began to move about the beginning of Advent, full of hope and courage.

Nov.  
20th

They followed the eastern bank of the Nile, accompanied by a convoy of boats carrying supplies. The country was intersected by canals and water-courses and difficult for the passage of a large force. The first obstacle of this kind was crossed by damming its bed, in the face of five hundred horse of the Saracens, whom the Templars, being in the van, charged, contrary to orders, and destroyed. Nevertheless the advance was of extreme slowness, and a month had passed when they arrived at Mansourah, and found the way stopped by a deep and broad arm of the Nile, called Tafnis or Ashmoun, flowing between them and the town, where lay the main Infidel army prepared to dispute the crossing.

The Sultan Saleh was already dead, having been carried off by his malady a week after the Christians left Damietta. His eldest son, Moadham Turan Shah, was in Mesopotamia at the time, on the farthest confines of the empire, whither his father's jealousy had removed him. Saleh had sent for him when he perceived the end approaching, and had ordered his decease to be concealed until the arrival

of his successor. The command was well obeyed. His favourite concubine, Sajareldor, a woman of extraordinary ability and character, such as the East sometimes produces, by a sort of miracle, out of the unfavourable surroundings which enervate a whole sex, took the reins of government; and, in alliance with the Emir Fakareddin, whom age, rank, and military reputation made the most powerful subject of Egypt, imposed her authority and was recognised as regent by the captains of the Mamelukes, to whom alone the Sultan's death was avowed.

In this crisis of affairs the Saracens would have been glad to be quit of their enemy, and it appears that terms were proposed to the crusaders, to the effect that they should give up Damietta and receive instead the kingdom of Jerusalem and the release of all captives. Louis was easily persuaded to reject such a peace, which was obnoxious both to the fanatic zeal of the Count of Artois and to the policy of the Legate. The first, inflated with victory, aimed at the total overthrow of Egyptian power; the other considered rightly that it was a dear bargain which gave them, in exchange for their present conquest and future hopes, nothing but the nominal possession of Palestine, which the Sultan could reduce again with ease if his strength at home was left unimpaired. Both sides, therefore, turned to the arbitrament of arms, the Christians flushed with achievement and confident of success, the Infidels preparing to fight no longer for a distant province, but for the very heart and life of their empire.

The tactics of the crusaders were of the simplest

kind, and no plan suggested itself to them, having arrived before Mansourah, but to repeat their former device and throw a mole across the Tafnis. But this undertaking, difficult in itself from the breadth and volume of the stream, became impossible in face of a numerous and active enemy, well versed in all the arts of war and greatly superior in engines. To protect the building of the mole two cat-castles, as they were called, were constructed. These were covered galleries ending in towers armed with arbalests throwing quarrels. They were pushed forward to the water's edge, and men working under their shelter heaved earth and other materials into the river. On the other side the Saracens ranged sixteen large catapults, which, though they could not break the cat-castles, made the approaches dangerous, and swept a wide space between the Tafnis and the Nile. They also sent bodies of horse across the Tafnis higher up, to cut off convoys and assault the enemy's encampment. And, as the mole advanced, they dug out the opposite bank, widening the stream, so that the Christians saw the labour of three weeks undone in a single day. The Infidels were much encouraged by their first successes, and Fakareddin boasted that before the month was out he would eat in the French King's tent.

As the operations seemed likely to be prolonged, Louis took measures to secure his camp, closing it with a ditch on the further side between the two rivers. He himself, with the Count of Anjou, guarded the southern front towards Cairo; the Count of Poitiers took the northern towards Damietta;

the Count of Artois was charged with the protection of the engines. By this array the incursions of the enemy were checked, and an attack which they were emboldened to deliver, having crossed the river in great force, was defeated with slaughter. They saved themselves by retiring within range of their catapults, where the victors did not venture to follow.

The mole made little progress, but the King and the barons persisted in the attempt, till the Saracens brought up a new and formidable engine which threw Greek fire. The missile flew through the air with a noise like thunder, says the historian of the crusade. It was the size of a barrel, with a tail of fire, making night like day. The Christians were amazed and helpless before so terrible a weapon. They fell on their knees each time the Saracens shot, and prayed to be delivered from peril. The fire was directed against the cat-castles; at first only by night; presently by day, when a hail of stones from the catapults could prevent any effort to extinguish the flames. In this way one of the cat-castles was burned at the first attempt, to the rage and despair of the Count of Anjou, who was guarding it.

The King then changed his plan, resolving to bridge the river at once before worse happened, using the boats of the army. When the Count of Anjou's turn of command came round — for this opportunity was given him of retrieving his disaster — the remaining cat-castle was run out suddenly to the end of the mole, to protect the work. But the Saracens were ready, and, concentrating their shot on

the mole speedily cleared it of men, then launched Greek fire against the cat-castle and reduced it to ashes. The Christian army saw its destruction with joy; so much did they dread the danger to which its defence had lately exposed them.

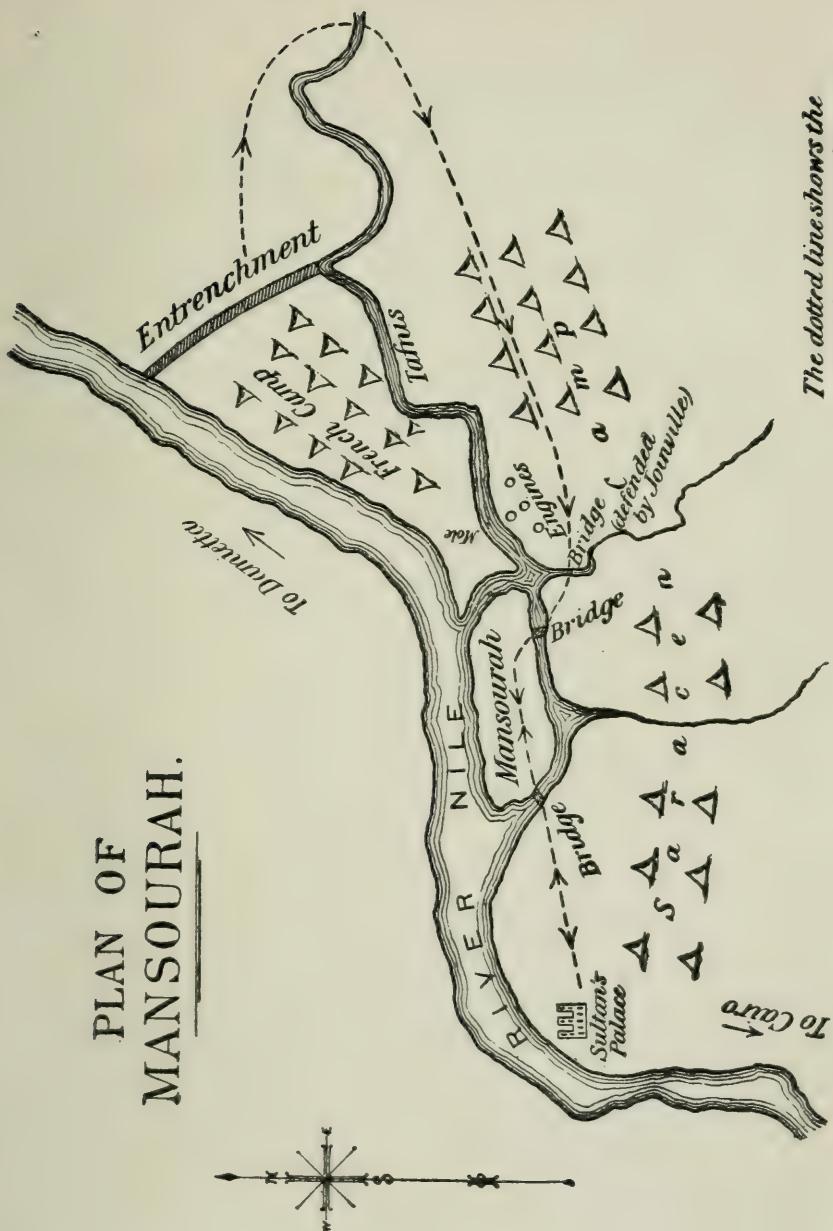
It was now February. The crusaders were no nearer crossing the Tafnis than when they arrived on its bank, and in a council of war the barons confessed themselves at a standstill. Then Humbert of Beaujeu, the Constable, said that certain Bedouins had offered for five hundred bezants to show him a ford passable by horsemen. The King snatched at the chance, and ordered the price to be paid. He left the Duke of Burgundy with the footmen and the lords of Palestine to guard the camp, and, taking the whole strength of his cavalry, marched by night to the ford. It lay about four miles downstream, and proved a slippery and dangerous crossing, with high, crumbling banks, but watched only by a few hundreds of the enemy, who fled without offering resistance. The van was given to the Templars, experienced in Eastern warfare; the second place to the Count of Artois, whom the King strictly enjoined, knowing his impetuous temper, not to advance too far in front of the rest. But he was no sooner across than he began to press past the Templars in order to pursue the flying Infidels. They remonstrated, bidding him keep his place; but he could not have stopped had he wished; for his bridle was held by a deaf knight, who heard nothing that they said and kept urging him forward, shouting,

A.D.  
1250Feb.  
8th

"On to them ! On to them !" Ashamed to be outpaced, the Templars set spurs to their horses, and together they raced galloping forward right on to and through the skirts of the Infidel encampment. Nothing could resist the furious shock ; the Saracens scattered before them, taken unawares besides. Fakareddin, who was painting his beard in a bath, rushed out half-armed to rally his men, and fell fighting. The charge was carried up to the enemy's engines, opposite the Christian camp on the other bank. Here a halt was called. The Master of the Templars urged that they should wait for the King and the hinder division, and should seize the engines and the bank, which would secure communications with the rest of their army. But the Count of Artois, seeing Mansourah lie open before them, scouted the sage counsel as cowardice or worse, upbraiding the notorious lukewarmness and treachery of the military orders. His insults broke their prudence. "Lift up our banner, then," cried the Grand Master ; "let us go to our death." William Longsword, who tried to appease the quarrel, got nothing but fresh taunts from the fiery count ; as he flung back a hot answer they all put on their helmets, and with pennons displayed drove on again into Mansourah and out beyond it as far as the Sultan's suburban palace.

But by this time the Saracens had recovered from their surprise and the loss of their general. The Emir Bibars, the victor of Gaza, had arrayed the Mamelukes, and the Christians found themselves surrounded by overwhelming numbers. Endeavouring to retreat through the town and to rejoin their

# PLAN OF MANSOURAH.





main body, they were destroyed in the streets almost to a man, the Infidels obstructing the way with barricades and assailing them with missiles from the houses. Some were forced into the river and drowned. Robert of Artois fell, and William Longsword, and Raoul of Coucy, and two hundred and eighty knights of the Temple. The Grand Master escaped with the loss of an eye.

Meanwhile, the middle array of the French and the King himself with the rearguard having crossed the ford were advancing towards Mansourah. The whole force of the enemy was now in action. Their defence was ordered by Bibars, who threw his Mameluke horsemen in desperate charges against the foremost bands of crusaders, and rolled them back on the King's division, which came up with a great sounding of horns and trumpets. Louis was in the midst. "Never saw I so goodly a knight!" writes Joinville, who had been in front. "He shewed a head and shoulders above all his people, a gilded helm on his head, and a German sword\* in his hand." His company, the flower of the French knights, engaged the Mamelukes hand to hand. "It was a fair feat of arms; for none shot with bow or arbalest, but all was done with mace and sword between our men and the Turks in the mellay." The Infidels were driven back; and after holding a hasty council on the spot the King directed his march, by the advice of John of Valery, towards the engines, where he could join hands with the Duke of Burgundy across the river.

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\* That is, a large, two-handed sword.

The advance was hampered by a rain of arrows from the light troops of the enemy, and by repeated onsets of the Mameluke chivalry. Once it was stayed to disengage the left, where the Counts of Poitiers and Flanders were hardly pressed. The bank and the engines were reached at last, and here was the most desperate struggle of the day ; for the Turks charged furiously home, trying to force the Christians into the Tafnis. They drove in the flank and came as far as the King. Six of them seized his bridle to drag him off, but he freed himself with great blows of his two-handed sword. Some of the French lost heart, and plunged into the water, to swim to their camp on the other side, and were drowned.

Meanwhile Humbert the Constable, who had ridden off with Joinville to aid the Count of Artois, on a report that he was defending a house in Mansourah, found fresh bodies of the enemy coming up from that quarter. They seized the bridge spanning a brook on this side the town ; there Peter of Brittany joined them, galloping back from Mansourah all bloody with wounds. With his help and that of the Count of Soissons they checked the Saracens and saved the King from being surrounded. Louis on his part maintained his ground, encouraging and rallying his men, till the Duke of Burgundy could bridge the stream from the end of the mole with a rough raft hastily constructed. Across this, at sunset, the Constable brought the French crossbowmen, who, arraying themselves in front of the knights, let fly a shower of bolts. Then the Infidels turned and fled, leaving their camp, which the Bedouins had

pillaged, and their engines in the hands of the crusaders.

It was a Pyrrhic victory, and the fruits remained with the Saracens. The fight had been fierce and bloody, and the loss heavy to both sides ; the more easily borne, therefore, by the greater multitude. The victors, exhausted by wounds and fatigue, were not in a position to pursue their advantage ; the vanquished, encouraged by their nearness to victory and abounding in fresh resources, withdrew with confidence and the intention to attack in their turn. They triumphed in the destruction of the Christian vanguard, especially as the surcoat of the Count of Artois, emblazoned with the golden lilies, was found among the slain and believed for a time to be the King's. And the death of Fakareddin was a gain, since the conduct of the war devolved on a more vigorous and able commander.

Louis lay that night in the enemy's pavilions. As he rode to his quarters, the Provost of the Hospital, who had just crossed the river, came up and, kissing his armed hand, asked whether there was any news of the Count of Artois. "There is sure news," said the King ; "I know that my brother is in Paradise." "Ha ! Sire," said the provost, "you have consolation ; for you have gained more honour than any King of France before you. You have passed a river in face of your enemies, and have beaten and chased them from the field and taken their tents and engines." "God be praised for all He has done for us," the King replied ; but great tears were seen to fall from his eyes.

The Saracens, who had but drawn off a little distance, assaulted the French in their new encampment next day at dawn ; and again, in full force, two days later. The King had surrounded his army with a wooden palisade. They charged it on horse and on foot, after throwing Greek fire ; and breaking through in one quarter, where the Count of Anjou was stationed, would have carried the position, had not Louis himself led an impetuous rescue and driven them back. At other points also the assault was repulsed, not without hard fighting.

Failing to storm, they contented themselves with a blockade under the eye of their new Sultan, who arrived in Egypt a fortnight after the battle of Mansourah. The star of the Christians was sinking fast. It was well for the King to encourage his troops and remind them that they had been victorious in two general engagements. Crippled by wounds, worn out with hardship, demoralised by failure, so far from marching on Cairo, they were in fact besieged in the two camps which they now occupied, one on each bank of the Tafnis. Their position grew less tolerable daily. In a short time, as the bodies of the slain rose to the surface of the water, the river was covered with rotten and stinking corpses, which choked the whole stream under the bridge joining the camps and for a stone's throw above. It took eight days to bury them in pits, where they continued to spread infection. Being the season of Lent, the army fed on fish, which were gorged with human flesh. The sultry and corrupted air, the poisoned water, the unwholesome diet, soon bred a frightful

plague. The limbs of the sick withered; their skin turned black, like an old boot. Their flesh died and rotted round the mouth and gums, and had to be cut away before they could eat. Copious discharges of matter flowed from the head; bleeding at the nose was a sign of death. The whole camp was filled with groans and cries, "like those of women in travail." The very priests, who attended the sick, fell down as they lifted the Host, stricken with the same malady. Famine was soon added to pestilence. No supplies could reach them; for the Saracens with their light cavalry beset all the roads and paths, and dragging their galleys overland to a spot below the camp closed the approach from Damietta by river, and cut off several convoys, eighty vessels in all, before it was even suspected they were there. The scarcity was such that by Easter an ox was worth eighty pounds, a sheep or a pig thirty, and a measure of wine ten. "The French," says the chronicler, "a nation above all others dainty and delicate in their food, were compelled to eat the most unclean and horrible substances, and even their precious horses."

The faith of many began to waver as they considered their present misery and recalled the numerous disasters of the Christians in the last thirty years. A multitude of common soldiers deserted to the enemy, who fed them and took them into service. They were allowed to keep their religion, but some earned rich rewards by apostacy.

In addition to these evils, discord arose in the camp upon proposals of truce made by the Saracens,

March  
27th

who offered, as before, to exchange Jerusalem for Damietta, but demanded the King's person to be left as a hostage. The barons would not hear of this. "Better every man of us should be killed or taken," one of them declared, "than that we should be said to have left our King in pawn." But the mass of the army, regarding such nice scruples less than the hope of avoiding their distresses, murmured at the rejection of the proffered terms.

The King had already given up his encampment on the farther bank, and withdrawn his whole army into the space between the Tafnis and the Nile; not without damage from the enemy, who attacked during the crossing. But the position was not bettered except in safety from assault. Seeing, therefore, that all must perish if they stayed where they were, he prepared to retreat on Damietta. The sick were placed on galleys to be sent down the river. The same way went the Legate, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and the Duke of Burgundy. Louis, though suffering from the general plague and from dysentery, so wasted that his bones seemed coming through the skin, and so weak that he could not walk, and several times swooned away, refused to accept this means of escape, which was pressed on him by his counsellors. "I have brought my people here," he said, "and I will take them back with me or die with them." Accordingly, mounted on a palfrey and unarmed, he took his place with the rearguard, the post of danger.

The retreat began in the night. The Saracen horsemen soon pursued; for the King's orders to

break the bridge had not been executed in departing. They came up with the dawn and rode in upon the French, who, enfeebled by sickness and tottering from hunger, were in no condition to repulse them. Order and discipline were lost. The retreat became a rout, and then a massacre. The oriflamme of France, the great standard of the Templars, the banners of Christian barons, known and dreaded by the Infidels on many stricken fields, were thrown down and trampled into the bloody mire. Scattered into knots, the crusaders fought desperately, or with less fortitude threw down their arms and were dragged away captive. For a while a faithful knight or two drove the enemy off the King, "like flies off a cup," as he said himself. But his sickness was heavy on him : he was obliged to dismount and be carried into a hut. He did not desire to live ; indeed, it seemed unlikely that he could survive his malady till nightfall, even if he escaped the swords of the Saracens. But when his brothers and a few counsellors who remained near him urged that by timely surrender he still might avert the total destruction of the army, he consented that Philip of Montfort should go to make what terms he could with the Emirs. While Philip was treating, a cry was raised among the soldiers through treachery or mistake : "The King orders you to yield ; do not cause the King to be killed." Thereupon the unconquered remnant yielded and gave up their swords. The Emirs, seeing this, said to Philip that they would give no terms to those who had surrendered already. Louis himself was surrounded and seized ; and the

April  
5th

whole Christian host slain or taken prisoners; for even the vanguard, which had pushed on almost to Damietta, was cut off and captured on the morrow.

Those who went by river fared little better. The Duke of Burgundy, the Legate, and some others forced a way down; but most of the vessels, crowded with the sick, were attacked by the enemy's galleys and by missiles from the shore, and either fired and sunk or taken with all on board. Great numbers were butchered and thrown into the stream, especially of the common sort and those whom sickness made an encumbrance. A few, preserved in hope of ransom, were carried to Mansourah, whither the King and the rest of the prisoners had been conducted, over ten thousand in all.

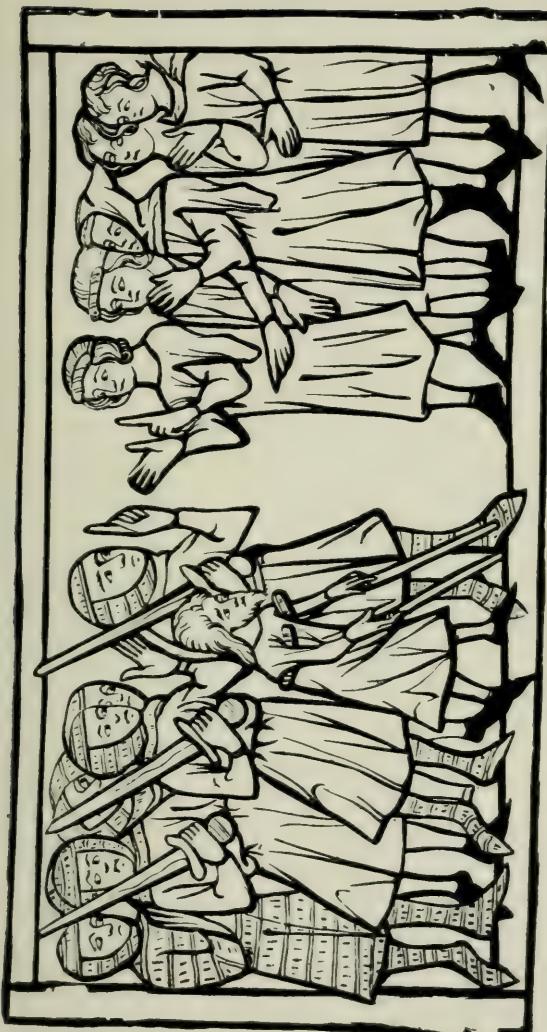
The Christian patience and fortitude of Louis shone out brightly in his great calamity. Racked by illness and pain—though his life was saved through the skill of Saracen physicians—without attendants, clothes, or the common necessaries of life, threatened with torture or death, amid the overthrow of his hopes and the ruin of the holy cause to which he was vowed, he preserved an outward calm and a cheerful faith which were the marvel of all beholders. He was not heard to utter a single murmur against the decree of Providence, a single complaint or angry word at the great or petty misfortunes in which he was fallen; but divided his time between the assiduous practice of prayer and devotion, and the endeavour to secure tolerable terms for his army and himself without injury to the interests of Christendom.

He reserved this business to himself, forbidding the barons to arrange private ransoms, lest, if the rich won free, the poor multitude might be neglected and left in slavery. He declared, therefore, that he would bear the whole burden, and would make no treaty for his own release that did not include his followers. In the first flush of triumph the Infidels gave rein to the insolence which victory implants in Orientals. They boasted they would lead the King in chains through Asia, a present to the Caliph of Bagdad. To the common herd of prisoners, who were cooped in a large open court, surrounded by a wall, they offered, by hundreds at a time, the choice of the Koran or death ; and numbers who would not apostatise were slain. But a short time brought reflection and a better treatment. Damietta was still untaken, an attempt to surprise it under cover of the Christian banners captured in the rout having failed. So strong a place, well garrisoned and provisioned, and open to reinforcement from the sea, might defy the attack of Saracen armies little versed in the arts of siege, and prove, like the fortified cities of the Syrian coast, a constant channel for fresh invasions. Moreover, the Sultan was anxious for his own reasons to bring on a speedy peace, desiring to break the Mamelukes, which he could not do while war continued. Accordingly he caused proposals of truce and ransom to be made to his prisoner.

The bargain was driven in the Eastern manner, at first with threats and high demands ; then, when these proved fruitless, descending to moderation and reason. The Infidels began by requiring the

King to deliver up the strong places of Palestine. He answered, it was not in his power, for they were the Emperor's fiefs, not his; and besides the seneschals of those places were sworn on the Saints not to surrender them for any man's ransom. They feigned anger, and threatened him with the torture of the boot; but he stood fast, merely saying that he was their prisoner and they could do what they would with his body. Making the same request to the barons separately, they got the same reply. It was then abandoned, and the question broached of surrendering Damietta. Even this Louis was unwilling to entertain, till he learned privately through his own followers that the town was not in condition to stand a long siege.

He asked that the Sultan would fix a sum for his ransom, adding that the acceptance of the terms depended on the Queen, not on him, though he would enjoin her to agree. They named a million gold bezants, or five hundred thousand French pounds. "I will give that willingly for my people," said Louis, "and Damietta for myself; since I am not one to be ransomed with money." The Sultan, admiring the spirit which did not haggle over so great a price, and not to be surpassed in magnanimity, at once remitted one fifth of the ransom, and the agreement was struck. It included a truce of ten years, and the release of all captives taken on both sides since the truce of the Emperor made with the Sultan's grandfather twenty years before. The Christians were secured in possession of the places they held in Palestine. Safety was promised for the sick and



ENVOYS OF THE SULTAN DISCUSSING TERMS OF RANSOM WITH CHRISTIAN CAPTIVES.

FROM THE "CREDO" OF JOINVILLE.



others who might remain in Damietta, till they could be fetched away, and for the property and stores of the crusaders left in that place.

These favourable terms, considering the plight of the crusaders, were obtained not less by the firmness of the King than through the anxieties of his enemy. The Emirs were astonished that he negotiated without eagerness or abasement and with a perfect indifference to his own safety. He treated, they said, as if they were his prisoners, and not he theirs. This high and royal quality of constancy under misfortune was greatly esteemed by the Saracens, and their minds, not incapable of valuing it in an adversary, were turned to a measure of respect and admiration. Thence grew a milder behaviour towards the captives; who were much benefited besides by the medical arts of the country, better acquainted than their own with the treatment and cure of the sicknesses which afflicted them.

Truce having been made, the Sultan set out towards Damietta. He carried the King and the principal persons of the French along with him, intending to release them and to take over the town. But the Mamelukes already suspected his designs, and feared the issue of peace. That famous military caste was then in its beginning. It had been formed first by the late Sultan out of slaves bought young and trained up to the use of arms, and had quickly acquired a dangerous preponderance in the state, which left it no alternative, in face of a jealous ruler, but supremacy or ruin. Moadham had not

the prudence to conceal his purpose until he was ready to strike. By the displacement of their leaders from his counsels and from high commands he irritated the pride of the Mamelukes, and gave earnest of their fate. Nor did he refrain from public threats against them and against Sajareldor. Her anger and fear incited them to anticipate their own destruction by the death of the Sultan. The Emirs attacked him at a banquet in his pavilion on the banks of the river, Bibars himself striking the first blow. The Sultan escaped wounded, crying for help and threatening vengeance, to a wooden tower near by. To divert the attention of the rest of the army, the horns were sounded as if for an assault on Damietta ; meanwhile the conspirators surrounded the tower and set it on fire, mocking Moadham's entreaties and menaces, and as he ran through a lane of them down to the Nile plunged their swords into his body. He reached the water and was killed swimming. A number of his murderers rushed to the French King's tent, and brandishing their bloody weapons asked what he would give to them who had slain his enemy. Their tumultuous entry and alarming aspect and cries in an unknown tongue seemed to portend instant death. But Louis kept a steady front and answered nothing. Soon explanations were made ; they professed friendship and promised to carry out the treaty. Octai, the captain of the Mamelukes and chief of the conspiracy, demanded to be knighted there and then, remembering that such an honour had been conferred on Fakareddin by the Emperor Frederick. Though the suit was

pressed in threatening terms, and his companions advised compliance, the King replied that he would knight no unbeliever.

The fate of the Christians hung in the balance for the next three days. The Emirs were divided, some wishing to kill all the captives and make an end, being no longer bound, as they held, by the oath of a dead man. Others, in the difficulty of choosing between rival claims, are said to have suggested that their prisoner should be made Sultan; but to have abandoned the thought on considering that he was zealously devoted to his own faith and would be no puppet in their hands. Whatever may be the truth regarding this project, Louis himself believed it had been entertained, and avowed that he would not have refused the perilous offer. In the end the Mamelukes bestowed the crown of Egypt on Sajareldor, who soon shared it with Azaddin, one of their number.

Meanwhile, in the trouble and confusion of the camp, where no man was master for the moment, the captives, huddled together, and menaced by the words and gestures of the revolted soldiery, were justly alarmed for their lives. At last the Emirs decided to ratify the treaty and demanded a renewal of oaths, requiring the King to swear that he would deny God and the Mother of God and renounce his hope of salvation if he broke faith with them. Louis, horrified, refused to utter the impious words. Neither their insistence could move him, nor the entreaties of his brothers, nor the sight of the aged Patriarch of Jerusalem, whom the Infidels tormented

till he cried out in pain that the King should swear and he would take the sin on his own soul.

On the fourth day from the Sultan's assassination, being the Friday after Ascension, in the morning,

**May 6th** Damietta was delivered to the Saracens according to agreement. The same evening the King and his followers were released.

They embarked on their own galleys, which lay in the river and had already received on board the occupants of the town, who during the month of the captivity had endured great troubles. The chief burden fell on the Queen, who bore it as befitted the wife of Louis. She was but three days from childbirth when the news of her husband's capture came; and the very day after her delivery saw her chamber filled with a mob of seafaring men, Pisans and Genoese, who declared their resolution to sail back home with their ships. Margaret summoned up strength to persuade them from this desertion, which would have left the army without hope of escape; appealing to their pity and cupidity she undertook to pay and feed them all at her own expense while they stayed. This she did at immense cost. The son whom she bore was given the name of Tristan, in commemoration of the sad circumstances of his birth. She was obliged to leave Damietta before her time of recovery was out, in view of its approaching surrender, and sailed to Acre to await the King.

The promise of the Saracens to respect the persons and property of the crusaders left in the place was not kept. Enraged, it is said, by finding that

the French in departing had destroyed most of the stores which should have been given up, they massacred the sick, and making three great piles, of military engines, of salted pork, and of dead bodies, set fire to all. Damietta was afterwards razed to the ground, lest it might tempt a third Christian expedition to seek a footing in Egypt.

It had been stipulated that one half the ransom should be paid before the King's departure, Alphonso of Poitiers being detained as an hostage till this was done. The treasure at Damietta sufficed, except for thirty thousand pounds, which was obtained with difficulty from the Templars. The weighing out of the money took two whole days. By an oversight of the Saracens the French paid ten thousand pounds too little; but Louis learning this from the rash boast of one of his people was angry at the fraud, and insisted that the error should be made good at once. As soon as the business was over he stood out of the river mouth, the Count of Poitiers joining him on the way, and set sail for Acre. Not all followed; for the Count of Soissons and other great men had departed on the morrow of liberation to return to France, disregarding the King who begged them to stay at least till the treaty was executed. With them went Peter of Brittany, stricken with a sickness, which ended his troublesome life three weeks afterwards at sea.

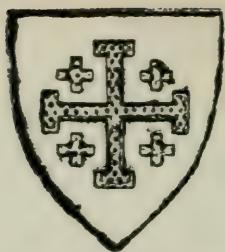
The news of the disaster was for some time disbelieved in western Europe. It was the more unwelcome and surprising as the report of the capture of Damietta had been followed by rumours which

turned the further plans and hopes of the crusaders into accomplished fact, and received a full dress of detail and verisimilitude from the invention of returning pilgrims or the willing imagination of their hearers. It was stated for a certainty that the King had taken Cairo, which was betrayed by its garrison and by an insurrection of Christian captives ; and that he had afterwards defeated the Sultan and a vast army in a pitched field fought from sunrise to sunset. Even the order of battle was related and the numbers of the slain. The Sultan had fled into unknown parts ; the Infidels had abandoned Alexandria ; and the French were masters of all lower Egypt.

The truth, as it became confirmed beyond doubt, was a rude awakening from these pleasant dreams. The grief was greatest in France, where it touched all ranks and classes of men. It was aggravated by the distance of the calamity, the slowness of communication, and the difficulty of ascertaining the fate of particular persons. Things were turned to the worst, as each man supposed his own kinsfolk and friends to have perished, and the whole realm took on the aspect of mourning and lamentation. The general body of Christendom felt the blow, though less keenly. Unbelief was encouraged and the zeal of faith chilled, particularly in Venice and those parts of Italy which trade and intercourse with the East made tolerant of the Infidels and anxious to conciliate their victorious power. The papal court was deeply troubled, and fell into deeper odium. For many imputed the misfortune to the

divisions and weakness engendered by its policy, saying that things would have gone otherwise, had the Emperor been free to assist the crusade. Men added up in the tale of its faults the slaughter in Egypt and the impending loss of Palestine, besides so much Christian blood wastefully spilt in Italy and Germany.

Among those who mourned the slain, the Countess of Salisbury, mother of William Longsword, is related to have shown a spirit deserving mention. She had retired from the world to become abbess of a house of nuns at Laycock. Hearing of her son's death it is said she fell on her knees and gave thanks to God that she had been thought worthy to bear such a one, who was now numbered with the martyrs and might be allowed to help her with his intercession in attaining Paradise.



THE KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM



THE TEMPLE

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE SOJOURN IN PALESTINE

1250-1254

THE King reached Acre after six days' voyage with the wreck and fragment of his expedition. Not one hundred knights accompanied him of the two thousand eight hundred who had assembled in Cyprus. Many were dead; many in prison; some had started for home. His brothers of Anjou and Poitiers and a few great lords still remained, but impoverished and unattended and sick of the war. The Count of Anjou in particular showed open impatience and aversion, avoiding the King's company and spending his time in dicing, even in the ship. This at such a time much annoyed Louis, who one day threw the dice overboard with his own hands, but could not bring his brother to a change of behaviour.

The question arose, whether to return at once to France, or to stay in Palestine and endeavour to relieve and confirm the Christians there established, and at the same time to procure the release of the captives and the fulfilment of the Egyptian treaty.

Louis laid the issue before his followers for deliberation and advice. On the one hand, he said, the Regent, in letters written before hearing of the disaster, urged immediate return, on the ground that the English truce had not been renewed, and the kingdom lay open to attack. On the other, he was assured by those of the country that departure at this moment involved the instant surrender of the settlements in the Holy Land, since no one would dare to defend them against the victorious Infidels, if he withdrew.

A week was given to consider the matter. When the Council met, the French lords one after another spoke for returning home. The Count of Jaffa, who was chief of the Eastern barons, professed unwillingness to speak; for his own castles, he said, were in risk and his motives therefore suspect. Being pressed by Louis he declared that were the King able to keep the field for a year he would win great honour by doing so. No one supported this view till the turn came to Joinville, who almost alone of the French was anxious to stay. For he remembered, he tells us, the parting words addressed to him by his cousin, which reflected the bitter experience of former crusades. “ You are going over sea; but take care how you return. No knight, be he poor or rich, can return without shame, if he leave in the power of the Saracens the poor people of God who have gone in his company.”

Accordingly he now voted to remain. The King’s treasure, he said, was not exhausted. By its help he could recruit his forces and keep the field; and the

poor captives, who had otherwise no hope of delivery, might be rescued from bondage. The Council was struck silent by his words, and affected to tears; for not one of them but had kinsmen and dear friends still prisoners in Egypt. Nevertheless they held to their desire, and cried down William Beaumont, Marshal of France, who spoke on the same side. Louis closed the Council, saying that he would announce his decision in a week. During the repast which followed he sat meditating in silence; then coming to Joinville, who stood apart at a window, sorry because the rest covered him with reproaches and he thought that the King resented his advice, leaned on his shoulder and talked with him about the debate. "Shall I do a bad act if I depart, say you?" he asked him. "So may God help me, Sire, as I think it," Joinville replied. "And if I stay, will you stay?" The answer was "Yes." "Be comforted then," said Louis, "for your advice pleases me well. But tell no one for a week."

At the end of that time he reassembled the Council and declared his decision. "My lords, I thank you all for your advice, whether to go or to stay. But I think that if I stay my realm runs no danger; for Madam my mother has people enough to defend it. And the barons of this country tell me that, if I go, all will go with me and the kingdom of Jerusalem be lost. Therefore I am resolved to stay. Those of you, rich men and knights, who are willing to stay with me, speak out and tell me your needs: and I will give you so much that it will be your fault, not mine, if you do not remain."

His words were received with surprise and visible grief, but did not stir the barons from their purpose. The King dismissed his brothers in August, nominally to help the Regent at home and to gather men and money for his succour. They departed certainly without reluctance, perhaps at their own request, the Count of Anjou at any rate feigning a sorrow that he did not feel; they were accompanied or followed by most lords of the army. Louis was left with the force of Palestine and of the Orders, and a few Frenchmen, who, thinking with Joinville, were willing to remain. These he took into pay, their own resources being exhausted.

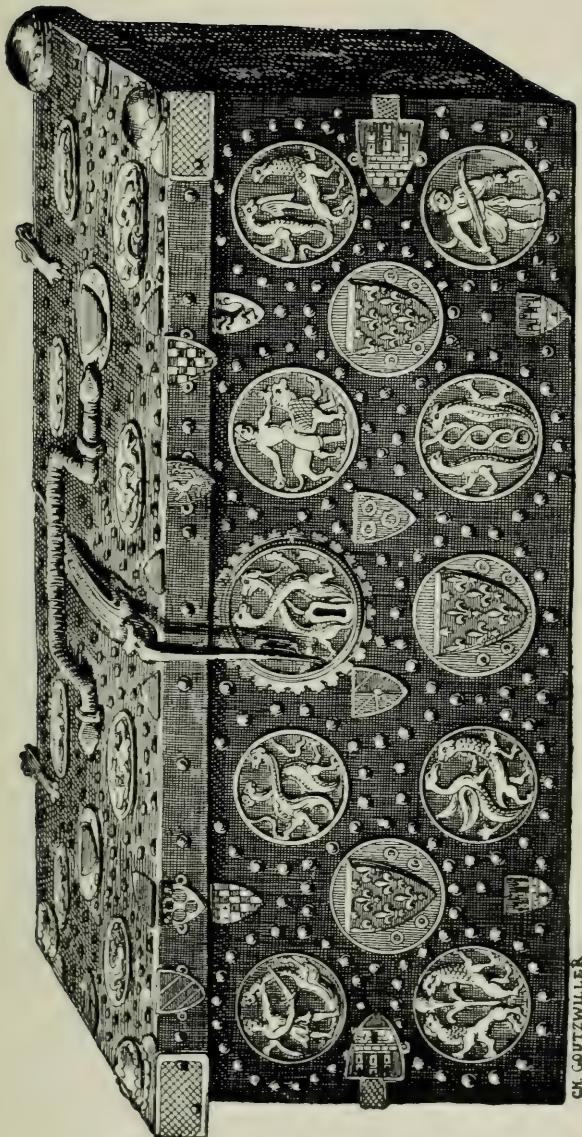
His situation was improved by the weakness of Egypt, following on revolution, and by the discords of the Saracen states. The Mamelukes who held Damascus and Syria refused to recognise the government of Sajareldor, which they had had no part in establishing, and submitted themselves to Naser of Aleppo, cousin of the murdered Sultan and chief of the House of Saladin, now that the Egyptian dynasty was destroyed. He occupied the country and sent envoys to Louis at Acre, demanding his alliance to avenge the death of Moadham, and promising the restoration of Jerusalem. Louis replied that he had made a truce with the Emirs; they had broken its terms which he would summon them to repair; if they refused he would be at liberty and willing to join the Sultan against them. He despatched John of Valenciennes to Egypt to demand fulfilment of the treaty.

The Emirs, distrusting female rule, had already

caused Sajareldor to take Azaddin Moaz, a Mameluke general, as her husband and associate  
**A. D.** in the empire; and the new Government,  
**1250,** alarmed by the successes of Naser, was in-  
**July 30** clined to execute the bargain with the Chris-  
tians. Two hundred knights and a great number of  
**Octo-** common people were released and brought  
**ber** to Acre. With them came an embassy de-  
siring friendship and alliance against Aleppo.  
The King named his conditions: the delivery of all  
prisoners and slaves, even of the children who had  
been taken young and brought up in the Mussul-  
man religion; the giving up for burial of the heads of  
slain Christians which had been fixed round the walls  
of Cairo, some ever since the battle of Gaza; the remis-  
sion of two hundred thousand pounds still owing on  
account of the ransom. The rescued knights, a wel-  
come addition to his forces, were taken into pay.

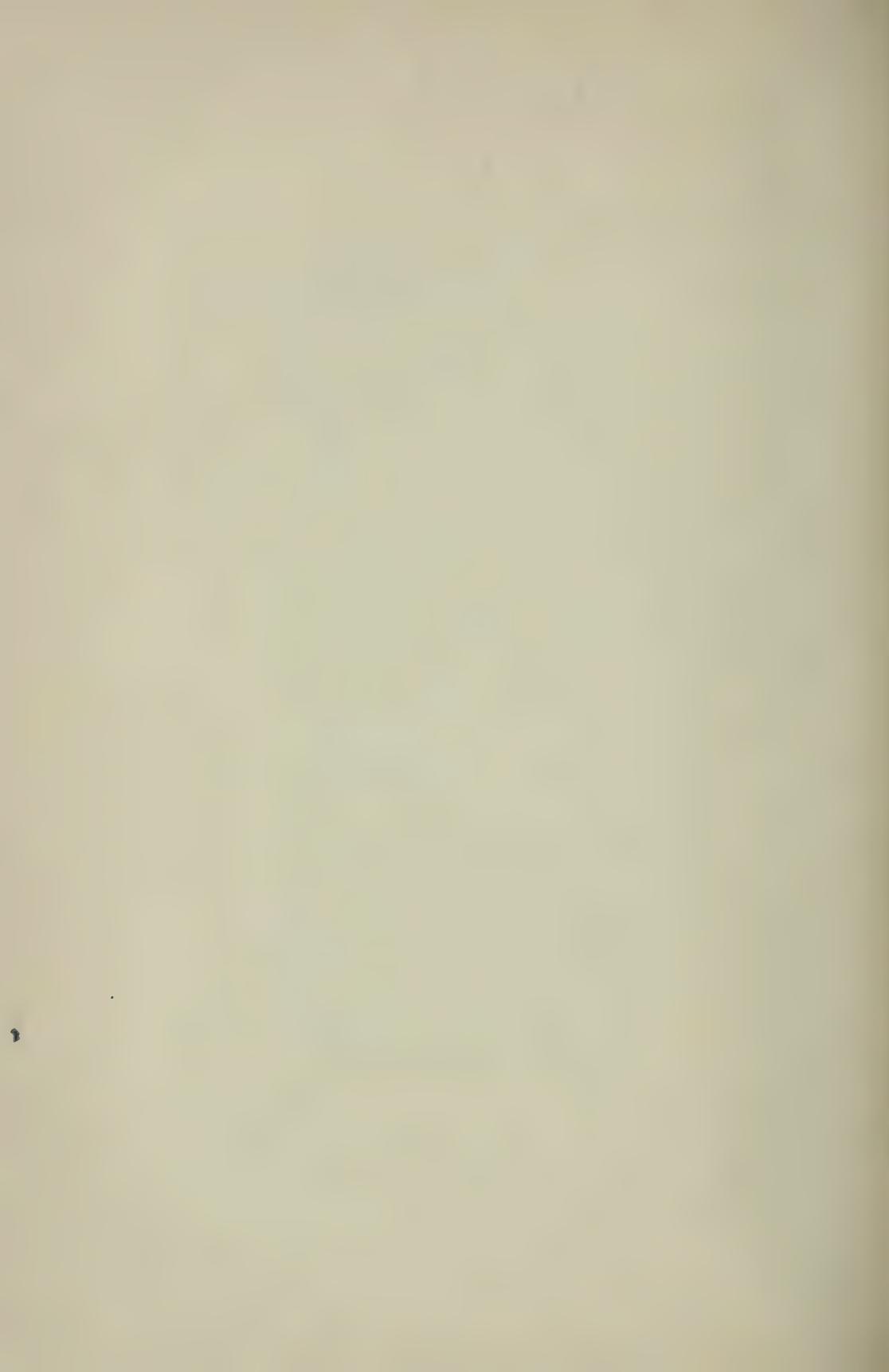
He remained at Acre till March of the following  
year, strengthening the fortifications and waiting on  
the turn of events. During the stay he received an  
embassy from the Old Man of the Mountain, who  
has been mentioned before. The account is curious,  
and illustrates both the unusual courage of the King  
and the remarkable position of the Assassin prince.

His envoy was followed by two attendants, carry-  
ing knives and a winding sheet, to be delivered as  
tokens of death to those who refused his demands.  
Being admitted to the King's presence he asked if  
he knew his master. Louis replied that he had  
heard of him. "Then if you have heard of him,"  
said the envoy, "I wonder that you have not sent



COFFER OF SAINT LOUIS.

CH. GOTZWILLER



presents to make him your friend, as the Emperor of Germany, the King of Hungary, and the Sultan of Babylon\* do every year; for they know that they only live as long as my master pleases. But if you will not do that, then get him released from the tribute which he owes to the Temple and the Hospital, and he will hold you free." Louis gave no answer, but told the envoy to return to another audience in the afternoon. He came, and found the King sitting between the Masters of the Temple and the Hospital. Being ordered to repeat his words of the morning he did so reluctantly and with evident shame. The Masters rated him soundly, saying that were it not for respect to the King to whom he was sent they would drown him in the sea. They commanded him to return to his master and come back within a fortnight with letters and presents to make satisfaction. This bold treatment was successful. The ambassador returned within the stated time, bringing the shirt of the Old Man, as a token, he said, that the King of France was as near to his master's heart as the shirt is to the body. He brought also presents of jewels exquisitely worked. Louis accepted the gifts and sent others in return.

Meanwhile the war between Egypt and Aleppo was pursued with varying success. Naser invaded Egypt and came within a day's march of Cairo. There he was defeated with heavy loss in February and fled back to Damascus; but remained strong enough to repel an invasion in

A. D.  
1251

\* That is, the Sultan of Egypt; Cairo was generally called Babylon by the Westerns at this time.

his turn the following summer. Louis had concluded no engagement with either party, and was too weak to interfere in the struggle had he wished. But it left him undisturbed to recruit, to fortify, to repress disorder, and establish government in the neighbourhood of the Christian settlements.

At the end of March he went from Acre on a pilgrimage to Nazareth by way of Cana and Mount Tabor. Clad in a hair shirt, and fasting the whole day, he approached the holy place. As it appeared in the distance he lighted from his horse and fell on his knees in prayer; then entering on foot, heard high mass and received the sacrament from his confessor. Immediately afterwards he removed with his followers to Cæsarea, and set himself to restore that place from the ruin which the Saracens had made, building a high and thick wall with towers, ditches, and other defences. There he remained over a year, except for a few journeys, pressing on the troublesome and costly work of fortification, even labouring with his own hands to encourage the others and gain the indulgences which the Legate had promised to all who took part.

He was hindered by narrowness of means and chiefly by want of men. If he had but a reinforcement of two hundred knights, he wrote, he would be able to make advantage out of the divisions of the Infidels. His brothers showed little zeal in the raising and forwarding of succours; and from the rest of Christendom he received no more help in his misfortunes than he had in the inception of the crusade. The Emperor, it is true, sent envoys to

the Sultan, on the news of the captivity, to procure the King's release ; but the mission arrived too late and found him already at Acre. Its good faith was suspected ; whether justly, does not appear. The English King took a more unfriendly attitude, refusing to renew the expired truce except for short periods, pretending grievances, and reviving his unsettled claims. Not that he had the spirit or the power to pursue them in arms, even had the Pope not threatened to punish such attempt by an interdict on England ; but the pretext of impending war was useful in obtaining supplies of money for other needs from his unwilling subjects. The trading cities of Italy, Venetians, Pisans, and Genoese, had their own quarrel with the crusaders and the King, alleging various losses and wrongs inflicted on them in course of the expedition, especially at Damietta. They put themselves right by waylaying the French on the high seas and robbing or drowning those whom they caught.

Pope Innocent did not swerve from his strife with the Emperor on account of the misfortunes of the Christian cause. Nor did the enmity cease with Frederick's death. Innocent ordered a crusade to be preached against his sons, offering larger indulgences than were given for the crusade of Palestine, while he filled his coffers by releasing from their vows for a fine those who had undertaken the latter. The French Council, indignant that their King should be weakened and pinched in his adversity, and Christian swords diverted from his aid to intestine

A. D.  
1250,  
De-  
cem-  
ber  
13th

strife and the service of Roman ambition, confiscated the lands of all Frenchmen who joined the papal army. "Let those who fight for the Pope live on the Pope," said the Regent.

She almost alone remained faithful to her son, when in the first shock of disaster his reputation grew clouded even in his own kingdom. She guided the realm with a steady hand in the moment of distress and danger. She staved off the English demands and induced her nephew Ferdinand of Castile to take the cross; death unhappily prevented the execution of his design. She raised the immense sums required for the ransom, the war, and the works to be carried out in Palestine, chiefly by tithing the revenues of the Church. It was only by aid of these supplies that Louis was able to keep his footing; since nearly the whole force with him was serving for pay and at his cost. During three years' sojourn the charges of his hostel amounted to a hundred and sixty thousand pounds; of fortification to nearly one hundred thousand pounds; of the army and navy to six hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds. The total of expense was over a million pounds, a vast quantity of money according to the standard of those times. In addition to this, one great convoy of treasure, twenty-two chests of silver, was lost at sea in a storm. It speaks well for the riches of France and the strength of the Government that such heavy exactions were levied with so little trouble though not without complaints.

But the kingdom was disturbed for a time by a strange disorder. This was the Shepherds' crusade,

as it was called, an agitation among the mass of the people, which cannot be explained in its causes or traced to any ordinary motive of mankind. Such frenzies appear to spread by a sort of contagion, and were perhaps less uncommon, at any rate more strongly effective, in an age when simplicity and ignorance were wider diffused than at present, and when fewer were accustomed to check the infectious current of emotion by reasoning and reflection. The author of the Shepherds' crusade was a renegade Hungarian monk, who began preaching in France in the spring of the year 1251. He affirmed that the Virgin Mary had sent him to call shepherds and country people to the recovery of the Holy Land ; and had promised to the humble and weak the success which was denied to the mighty and strong in arms. He pretended to hold her written mandate in his hand, which was closed by a natural deformity. This token, added to his eloquence and ascetic habits, soon procured crowds of followers. They passed through the country bearing banners on which was painted a lamb carrying a cross. Everywhere the labouring people, especially shepherds, ran to join them, leaving the fields and flocks. Their numbers were said to amount to a hundred thousand, women and children as well as men ; they divided themselves into troops by hundreds and thousands. Their leaders professed to work miracles and see visions of angels ; they claimed episcopal authority, gave blessing and absolution, celebrated marriages, and conferred the cross. The clergy disfavoured these unauthorised proceedings ; and so drew on

themselves the fury of the fanatic preachers, who reviled bishops and friars and priests alike for greed and pride and hypocrisy. Their followers joined in the cry and carried their violence from words to deeds, wounding and killing all who opposed their madness, with swords, axes, reaping-hooks, and other rude weapons which they carried. A detachment entered Paris, where the Hungarian preached in the church of St. Eustace, dressed in bishop's robes. Thence he went to Orleans and was received by the citizens, though the Bishop forbade any cleric to hear or join him, under pain of anathema. The scholars of the University disturbed his preaching; they were set on by his partisans and many were slain. The attack spread to the body of the clergy, who were killed or driven into hiding and their houses sacked and burned.

The Regent had refused at first to interfere with the crusade, approving its object and hoping it might turn to the King's advantage. But the tumults and excesses of the fanatics grew greater. Their bands were joined by many thieves, outlaws, and rascals of all sorts, for the sake of impunity and plunder: and these men easily turned the blind zeal of the simple multitude to their own purposes. Villages and even towns were entered and spoiled, the clergy in particular being robbed and ill-treated. The report of this caused Blanche to change her mind, and to take measures to disperse the mob and to seize and punish its leaders. They were excommunicated with her consent; while the laity also began to treat them as enemies. Meanwhile the Hun-

garian with a part of his following came to Bourges, where they robbed the houses of the clergy who had fled. They also entered the synagogues of the Jews, burned their books, and took their goods. The townsfolk, however, were not deceived by their pretended miracles; and when the news came that they were excommunicated and outlawed, expelled them; and afterwards pursuing, killed the Hungarian and some others. The multitude, finding no one to lead or support them, and everything hostile, for the most part melted away and returned home. A few bands remaining in different parts were broken up, and the chiefs taken and hanged or killed by the peasantry. One troop reached Bordeaux, and was driven away by Simon of Montfort, governor of Gascony. A number of the honester sort received the cross afresh and went to join the King in Palestine.

While Louis was at Cæsarea the envoys who went from Cyprus to the Khan of Tartary returned with the account of their journey. They had travelled from Antioch for a whole year through countries subjugated by the Tartars and full of the traces of their devastating cruelty. The Khan was dead before they arrived, and his successor received them as bearers of the homage of the French King, taking their presents as tribute and using the mission to exalt his own glory and power in the eyes of his vassals, who were bidden to see how strange princes sent obedience from the ends of the earth. Tartar ambassadors accompanied them back to Palestine, with a boastful message that peace was good and only to be had by favour of the great Khan. They

recounted the roll of his enemies who had perished by the sword, and bade the French seek his friendship and pay yearly tribute of gold and silver, lest they should be destroyed in like manner. The King was sorry he had sent, since his overtures were so interpreted. About the same time some reinforcement was received from Norway and from other parts, but of no great strength.

The account which has come down of the King's behaviour during this time and the rest of his stay in the Holy Land has helped much to confirm his fame; and his patient struggle with adverse and narrow circumstances is the most notable part of the crusade to those who regard the moral qualities of action rather than the splendour of the stage on which it is displayed. Not that his sojourn was fruitless of achievement, though he was not allowed to accomplish his dreams. But it is most memorable because it afforded scope for the practice of the virtues, the active piety, the unshaken fortitude, the boundless charity, which, exercised in such a place and such a cause, already began to shed round his character the halo of sainthood.

His messengers were allowed to pass through Egypt searching out Christian slaves and prisoners. Those held by the Sultan or who lay in dungeons were set free; those who belonged to private persons were ransomed at the King's cost. They were brought to Acre, a hundred, or three hundred, or five hundred at a time, and being destitute were supplied from the royal bounty with suitable clothing and a hundred drachmas apiece or more, according to

their condition. The whole number thus relieved was over three thousand men; and a much greater multitude was released, some having been many years in bondage.

Louis visited the sick in the army constantly during the expedition, especially his own servants, without regard to his health. His devotion was exemplary, as always. Joinville relates how, after hearing one mass at daybreak, he rode out into the country in the early morning to attend another at a small shrine built to commemorate one of the miracles of our Lord, scoffing at the danger which at once suggested itself to the mind of his companion. He preserved an unruffled cheerfulness and a temper not soured by misfortune, though it was sometimes tried by the exorbitant demands of his followers. "I will not take pay," said Joinville to him at Cæsarea, "but I will make this agreement with you, that, whatever I ask, you shall not be angry; and I on my part will not be angry if you refuse it." "When the King heard this," the writer continues, "he burst out laughing, and said he would retain me on those terms; and he took me by the hand and brought me to the Legate and his Council, and repeated to them the bargain we had made, and they were very merry at it." Some time afterwards Joinville made a request which the King said was unreasonable. "You have broken our treaty," said Joinville, "that you were not to be angry, whatever I asked." "Nay," said Louis, smiling, "I am not angry; ask what you please." But he did not grant the request.

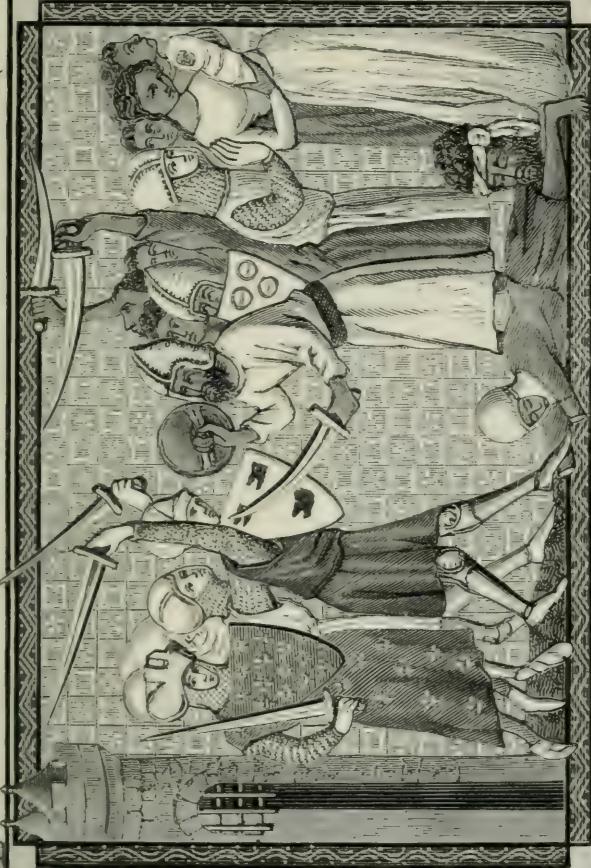
He did justice according to the uses of the country, showing particular severity towards a knight found in a brothel, who was sentenced to lose his horse and armour and be expelled from the camp; and towards the Templars, who had made a treaty with the Sultan of Aleppo without his leave. They were compelled to humble themselves in public and to renounce the treaty, and the brother who had negotiated it was banished from Palestine.

Little tolerance as he had for Infidels, he showed himself of a mercy and humanity towards them unusual in that age. He forbade their women and children to be slain or maltreated, and was more anxious to capture his enemies than to slay them, hoping to effect their conversion. "God, who knows all things, knows," he is reported to have said on one occasion, "that if the whole world were mine, I would barter it all for the gain of souls." Some of his prisoners were turned to believe; while other Saracens, several of high rank, came to him of their own accord and were baptised after instruction. The converts were well treated and carried back to France, where Louis trusted and enriched them. He also made an ordinance in Palestine that no one should revile or reproach renegades who had returned to their faith after escaping from captivity.

At Easter, 1252, the Egyptians accepted the terms which had been named eighteen months before, and a truce for fifteen years was concluded with their envoys at Cæsarea. There was an opposing party among the French, who thought the King diminished his honour by alliance with any Infidel; but

SARACEN WOMEN AND CHILDREN SPARED BY ORDER OF SAINT LOUIS.

FROM A FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT.





this feeling was less strong than at the beginning of the crusade, before zeal was tempered with experience or cooled by misfortune, and it yielded now to the imperious needs of policy. The Saracens undertook to restore all Palestine this side of Jordan, except four places; to give up all Christians whom they still detained; to surrender the bones of the dead for burial; and to remit the rest of the ransom. In return the King promised aid against Aleppo. He was to be at Jaffa with his forces in May, and the Emirs to be at Gaza by the same time; otherwise the treaty was null. But their march was delayed by a rising of Bedouins: and the Sultan of Aleppo, having failed to draw Louis over, despatched fifteen thousand men to the borders to hinder the junction of his enemies. The Mamelukes, who mustered less than half this number, were afraid to advance to Gaza; while the King, coming to Jaffa according to his promise, had only a few hundred knights and could not go to help them. The Egyptians therefore asked that the time of rendezvous might be put off; and meanwhile carried out the stipulations of the treaty relating to the release of captives and the restoration of Christian remains. They also sent the gift of an elephant, which was afterwards transported to France.

Louis having been welcomed to Jaffa by the Count remained there for a year. His following was encamped outside the fortress, which he laboured to strengthen and extend. He built a wall right round the outer town from one sea to the other, with three gates, twenty-four

A.D.  
1252

towers, and a moat. The Legate undertook one gate and a third of the wall; it cost him thirty thousand pounds. A church and a convent were also built within the fortification, and furnished by Louis with all that was needed for service and maintenance. As the troops of Aleppo were occupying the inland country as far south as Gaza, there were some excursions and skirmishes, with no great damage to either side; except that a foray which the Master of Saint Lazarus led forth without the King's knowledge was cut off by the enemy. All save four men perished; but a rescue went out when the news came to camp, and falling on the victors put them to rout.

During the stay at Jaffa Louis had the opportunity of visiting Jerusalem under the safe-conduct of the Sultan of Aleppo. But, like Richard of England, his great-uncle, he refused to look upon the Holy City which he could not save from the Infidel; fearing, it is said, lest other princes might cover themselves with his example, and think it enough to make the pilgrimage to the Sepulchre, without attempting its deliverance.

At the end of this year died Blanche, Queen dowager and Regent of France, worn out with the labours of an arduous life. Her closing days were embittered by the absence of her best beloved son, the death of another, and the illness of a third, the Count of Poitiers, who was struck with paralysis soon after his return. She had been failing in health for some time, and was seized with sickness at Melun, whence she

A.D.  
1252,  
Nov.  
28th

was removed to Paris, and then relapsed. A few days before death she received the vows and habit of the Cistercian Order. When the end approached she was carried to a bed of straw, and expired as the priests commended her soul to God, joining in their prayers with her last breath. She was buried in her royal robes, put on over the nun's dress, with her crown on her head, in the church of her own foundation at Pontoise. Her heart was afterwards removed from the body and interred beneath the choir of her other abbey, of our Lady of the Lily, near Melun.

She was a princess of the highest virtue and talents; a devoted wife, and a mother whose children were the living testimony of her worth. She was religious in life and conversation, the foundress of two abbeys, and charitable to the poor. Her temper was open and resolute and inclined to be arbitrary. She loved justice above all things and was not very scrupulous about the means of enforcing it. She governed the kingdom wisely for many years, and showed herself equal to great dangers. Her fault was jealousy of power, which did little harm, seeing the weakness of royal authority at the beginning of the reign and the continual attempts to enfeeble it further. She was jealous also of affection, especially that of her children; this led to her harsh treatment of the younger Queen which has been mentioned. She had a great reputation in her life throughout Europe; and a chronicler says that her death left France deprived of all comfort. Another adds that it was a great trouble to the common

people, since she protected them from the oppression of the rich and upheld justice.

An incident of her second regency illustrates both this side of her character and the disregard of legality which she sometimes showed. The Canons of Notre Dame at Paris, having some dispute with their serfs, had thrown a number of them into their dungeon, where they were near dying of hunger and ill treatment. A complaint was carried to the Regent, who requested the Canons to release their prisoners, promising to judge the matter herself and see right done. The Chapter refused, denying the Queen's title to interfere in the punishment of their own peasants, over whom they had power of life and death. To assert their authority they imprisoned also the wives and families of the serfs who had complained. Some of the unfortunate people died from starvation and overcrowding. When Blanche heard of it she fell into a rage, and gathering a body of armed men went to the dungeon of the Chapter and broke in the doors, herself giving the first blow with a staff she had in her hand. Having set the inmates free, she seized the revenues of the Canons until they made amends, and forced them moreover to enfranchise their serfs upon payment of a yearly rent.

The tidings of her death came to Jaffa. The Legate was first to learn it, and taking with him the Archbishop of Tyre and the royal confessor, drew the King apart into his chapel and there broke the news. Louis cried out, and shedding tears fell on his knees before the altar. "Lord God," he said, "I give Thee

thanks that Thou hast left me my mother so long ; and now hast taken her to Thyself according to Thy good pleasure. True it is, dear Lord Christ, that I loved her above all creatures alive, as she well deserved. But since it is by Thy will that she is dead, blessed be Thy name." The prelates retired and left him to say the office of the dead with his confessor. For two days he nursed his grief alone, speaking to no one ; and from that time forth he heard a private mass for his mother's soul every day, except Sundays and Holy days ; and caused many services to be said for her repose in the churches of Palestine and France. The Queen showed almost equal sorrow. Joinville asked why she grieved, for he knew there was little love between her and Blanche. She answered that it was not for herself, but for the King's sake, and her daughter's, who was now left in France without a woman guardian.

In the spring of the next year the Egyptians, having been attacked by the Sultan of Aleppo and fought a doubtful battle, made peace with him, abandoning their unratified treaty with the Christians, who were left to shift for themselves. The army of Aleppo returning from the south, thirty thousand strong, passed within a few miles of Jaffa, where Louis lay with his little force of fourteen hundred men-at-arms. The French crossbowmen harassed their retreat, and on Saint John's\* day there was a sharp engagement and a body of cavalry was sent to relieve the bowmen, who had entangled themselves with the enemy. But as

A.D.  
1253

\* That is, Saint John Lateran, May 6th.

soon as they were extricated the King withdrew his men, fearing the disparity of numbers; while the Saracens on their side, being straitened for supplies at the end of a long campaign, continued their retreat without assaulting the camp, to the surprise of the crusaders. Passing northwards they attempted to hold Acre to ransom, but were gallantly repulsed by the Christians of the neighbourhood, who had retired within the walls.

They then proceeded to Sidon, whither Louis some time before had despatched workmen, with a guard of soldiers, to repair the walls. At the enemy's approach, as the breaches were not yet closed, the small garrison withdrew to the citadel, which was very strong and surrounded by the sea, taking with them as many as could be crowded within its narrow limits. The Saracens burst into the undefended town, sacking it and putting the inhabitants to the sword. More than two thousand were slain. Report of the disaster reached the King as he was preparing to fortify an inland place, said to have been a stronghold in the wars of the Maccabees, between Jaffa and Jerusalem. He was much afflicted; and on the advice of the barons of Palestine, whom experience had taught that no fortress could be held for long in a hostile country unless provisioned from the sea, turned from his first design, in order to repair the ruin of Sidon.

He left Jaffa at the end of June and desired to attack Samaria on the way. But the native barons again opposed the enterprise, as too distant and dangerous for the King to expose his person, and with

it all their hopes, to the risk of cutting off and destruction. It was therefore given up, since Louis refused to send a detachment where he could not adventure himself, and the march was continued. As they lay on the sands near Acre, Joinville relates that there came a troop of pilgrims from Great Armenia, on their way to Jerusalem under safe-conduct of the Saracens, and asked him through an interpreter to show them the sainted King. He went to Louis where he sat in his tent on the ground, leaning against the pole, and repeated their request. "But I do not wish, Sire," he added, "to kiss your bones at present." Louis laughed aloud and bade the pilgrims be fetched. "And when they had seen the King they commended him to God, and he them."

When Tyre was reached the King divided his forces, proceeding himself to Sidon, while he sent a body to assault the strong place of Belinas, anciently called Cæsarea Philippi, which served the Infidels as a base for their ravages. He was persuaded with difficulty not to accompany this expedition himself, and detached for it nearly his whole force, remaining with so few that he would have run great danger had the enemy attacked him. The crusaders took Belinas by storm, but failed to dislodge the Saracens from their almost inaccessible fortress in the hills above the town. After burning the standing crops they returned to the King.

Meanwhile Louis arrived at Sidon, where his first care was to give burial to the dead Christians whom he found still lying in great numbers in the town

and along the shore. He caused long trenches to be dug, and hired peasants to collect the bodies and carry them thither on horses and camels. The work lasted five days; and every day from dawn to noon the King laboured himself with his attendants, gathering with his own hands the mutilated remains into vessels and sacks, and conveying them to the place of burial. The others remarked with wonder that he showed none of the natural signs of disgust and repugnance to the loathsome task; for the corpses were old and already fetid. When the trenches were full the Archbishop of Tyre read the burial service over them, stopping his nose with his vestments against the stench; so did the other prelates, and all except the King. The Archbishop in spite of his precautions fell ill and died three days afterwards.

The King then began to fortify Sidon, without interruption from the enemy, enclosing it with a wall strengthened by towers and ditches. The Queen having given birth to a daughter, who was named Blanche, came from Jaffa by sea to join him. The Christians were comforted at this time by a false report of the capture of Bagdad by the Tatars. Messengers arrived also from the Prince of Trebizond, requesting the King to send him a lady of his Court to wife. Louis answered that there were none with him; but that he should ask the Emperor of Constantinople, who was of the lineage of France, to give him one of his kinswomen; which he afterwards did.

The affairs of France, deprived of the prudent

head and vigorous hand which had guided their course, began to call for the sovereign's return. Danger gathered in the south and in the north ; and owing to the illness of Alphonso the chief direction fell to the Count of Anjou, whose rash, ambitious temper led him deeper into difficulty. Troubles in Gascony, which Simon of Montfort, ill supported from home, could not suppress, brought the King of England himself into that country. He took the opportunity of renewing his connections and intrigues in Poitou and Normandy ; and having arranged a marriage for his eldest son with the sister of the King of Castile, seemed to be preparing an attempt to regain his old losses ; to which the time was sufficiently favourable, had his capacity or inclination run with it.

A. D.

1253

The dispute between the half-brothers of Dampierre and Avesnes has been related already, and the settlement which was made by Louis before his crusade. The quarrel was renewed a few years later, when, William of Dampierre having been killed in a tourney,\* the family of Avesnes broke the award, and claimed a partition of Flanders. They were supported by their brother-in-law William, Count of Holland, who had been elected King of the Romans and so became suzerain of Hainault. Pretending a refusal of homage he deprived the Countess Margaret, who took the side of Dampierre, of her fiefs in the Empire, and authorised John of Avesnes to occupy Hainault. Both parties called in the help of their kinsmen and friends. The Bishops of Cologne

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\* In April, A.D. 1251.

and Liège, the Dukes of Brabant and Guelders, and other German princes who recognised William, joined with Avesnes; Margaret was assisted by the Counts of Bar and Saint Paul and a number of French barons. In a battle fought near Walcheren the party

**A. D.** of Dampierre was defeated with great slaughter.  
**1253,** Thirteen thousand French and Flemish  
**July** fell; Guy and John of Dampierre with the  
**12th** Count of Bar and all their chief allies re-  
mained wounded and prisoners in the hands  
of John of Avesnes, who, while he spared his moth-  
er's subjects in the rout, ordered no quarter to be  
given to the French.

Margaret, after attempting in vain to make terms with the victors, urged the people of Flanders to prolong resistance, while she went to seek succour in France. She approached the Count of Anjou and tempted him with the offer of Hainault for himself. Lured by this prize he assembled a considerable army, with which he entered Flanders; afterwards he received the submission of Hainault, and then re-turned, leaving garrisons in the towns. Early next year William of Holland marched in great force to repair his brother-in-law's injuries and his own. Charles met him near Douay; but a battle was averted by the mediation of the Count of Blois and other barons in the French army, who were related to the family of Avesnes: a truce was arranged for a time, during which things were to remain as they were.

**A. D.** **1254**

The news of the disturbances and dangers which threatened his realm was brought to Louis, together

with urgent entreaties from the French Council for his immediate return. The Christians of Palestine, placed in present security by the fortification of their cities, no longer pressed him to remain. After debating the matter and considering it with prayer and supplication for Divine guidance, he took his decision to depart. Calling Joinville he bade the Legate, who stood by his side, declare his purpose. "Seneschal," said the Legate, "the King is much pleased with your service, and very willing to pursue your gain and honour. And to set your mind at ease, he bids me tell you that he has made his preparations to return to France at the coming Easter." "God send he may do his will," answered Joinville. Afterwards the Legate took Joinville to his lodging. When they were alone he grasped his hands and began to weep. "Seneschal," he said as soon as he could speak, "I rejoice and give thanks to God that the King and you and the rest are escaping from the great dangers in which you have been here. But I am sorely grieved that I must leave your holy company, and go to the Court of Rome, to dwell with the unfaithful people that are there." A strange state of things, that a prince of the Church should shun the company of his brethren and the supreme seat of Christendom, and seek righteousness and good conversation in the camp of a king!

As Easter approached, Louis fitted out such ships as he had, thirteen in all, in the port of Acre, whither he had sent on before his wife and children. He left a hundred knights behind for the defence of Palestine. The Legate also was determined to stay for

another year and spend his remaining money in adding to the fortifications of Acre, that he might return with an empty purse and a good name. The clergy, barons, and people of the country escorted the King to his ship in procession, and took leave of him with sadness and tears. He obtained by the Legate's special grace permission for the Host to be carried on board his ship—which had never been granted before to the greatest princes—not only for the sake of his own devotions, but in order that any who died on the voyage might not be deprived of the last sacrament. And in other ways his diligence was shown to minister to the needs of the sick and wounded and to comfort their infirmity.

A. D.  
1254,  
April  
25th

Setting sail from Acre on Saint Mark's day they made a course to Cyprus. A fog coming down from the island, the royal shipmen mistook their bearings and ran the vessel on a sandspit. When she struck there was a panic. The passengers ran together, and were not reassured to see the sailors clapping their hands and crying out that they were all dead men. There was a shout for the galleys which followed to come up and take off the King, but they did not venture to approach; which was fortunate, since certainly they would have been swamped by the terrified crowd leaping in; for the great ship carried eight hundred souls.

The master of the mariners took a sounding, and discovering the ship to be in deep water, though fast, went to tell the King. He found him prostrated in prayer before the Host, which was kept in a tent on

the bridge, whither he had gone when he heard they were on the point of sinking. The Queen showed equal courage: when the nurses asked her, should they wake the children, "No," she answered, "let them go to God sleeping." Their calmness soothed the fears of the rest. Anchors were cast out for the night; and in the morning they found themselves off a rocky and dangerous shore. Divers were sent down and reported that part of the keel had been broken away. The mariners advised the King to leave the vessel and enter another, for the timbers were sprung, and she would probably be unable to stand the sea, even if she were got afloat. He asked his counsellors, who said that in such a matter the opinion of the sailors must be followed. Turning again to the latter he bade them tell him, would they leave the ship, were she their own and filled with their merchandise. They answered, no; they would run the risk; but for him it was different; he had no motive to put his life and his family in danger. "I have heard your opinion," said Louis, "and that of my own people; and I will tell you mine, which is this. If I leave the ship, there are five hundred persons and more on board, who fearing the danger—for all of them love their lives as well as I do mine—will remain in Cyprus and perhaps never be able to return home. Therefore I would rather commit myself and my wife and children into the hand of God than cause such injury to so great a number." Accordingly they set themselves to work the ship off, and succeeding by help of wind and oars put into port to repair and provision. How true was the

King's apprehension was shown by a rich knight of his company, who fearing to adventure farther remained in Cyprus, and was there a year and a half before he could get a passage home. The poorer people would have fared much worse.

The perils of the voyage were not yet over. Before they got clear of Cyprus a gale of wind arose, which threatened to drive them back on shore, though five anchors were thrown out. The Queen promised a silver ship to Saint Nicholas, and saw in the falling of the tempest an answer to her vow.

Again, a fire broke out in the Queen's chamber by the carelessness of her tirewoman, who left a linen veil hanging over a lighted candle. It was stayed by Margaret's presence of mind; for she awoke as the flames were spreading, and seizing the burning stuff in her hands, threw it into the sea, and crushed out the smouldering sheets. The incident much disturbed Louis, who from that time ordered all fires on board, except the great galley fire, to be extinguished every night, and would not go to bed until he was assured that this was done.

Joinville relates how the King discoursing with him pointed the moral of perils of the sea. "Senechal, God has shown us His great power, since one of His little winds, not one of the four master winds, went near to drown the King of France, his wife and children and all his company. We should give Him love and thanks for our deliverance from danger. The Saints say," he went on, "that such tribulations and great sicknesses and other persecutions which happen to men are warnings from our Lord. For as

God says to those who escape from sickness—‘You see that I might have caused you to die, had I willed,’ so perhaps He says to us, ‘You see that, had I willed, I might have drowned you all.’ And we ought to examine ourselves, for fear there may be something in us which displeases Him; and if we find any such thing, to put it away. For if we do not so, after the warning He has given us, He will strike us with death or some great misfortune, and body and soul will be lost. The Saint says, ‘Lord God, why do You threaten us? For if You destroy us all You will not be the poorer, and if You gain us all You will not be the richer.’ From this we may see, says the Saint, that God’s menaces towards us are not to increase His own profit or prevent His damage; but merely for the great love He has to us He wakes us by His menaces, that we may see our faults clearly and put away from us that which displeases Him. Let us so do,” said the King, “and we shall do wisely.”

On the voyage they came to the island of Pantellaria, inhabited by Saracens subject to Tunis. Three galleys were sent to visit it and buy fruit for the royal children. They were long in returning, and the sailors began to murmur and beg the King not to wait; for they were between Sicily and Tunis, both unfriendly; and the Saracens, they said, had seized the boats with their crews, and would presently fall upon the ship unless they escaped under press of sail. Louis refused to think of deserting his men and ordered the ship’s head to be set for land. As they drew in to shore the galleys

issued from the harbour. It appeared that they had been detained by six of those on board, sons of citizens of Paris, who would not leave eating the fruit which grew abundantly in the gardens. The King was enraged at their gluttony, which had caused the tack to be altered, by which, as it turned out, several days were lost; and in spite of their howls and tears and offers of ransom had them put in the ship's boat, the usual place of confinement for criminals, where they remained in great discomfort for the rest of the voyage.

After ten weeks at sea they came to the port of Hyères in Provence, belonging to the King's brother. Louis desired at first to sail on to Aigues Mortes and land in his own dominions, but yielded to the Queen and his companions, who were all anxious to be ashore. Disembarking, they remained at Hyères awhile to procure horses for the journey to Paris. It was here that the Abbot of Cluny coming to the King with a suit, as Joinville relates, presented him with two palfreys, worth five hundred pounds. The next day the King dealt with his business, giving him long and attentive audience. Afterwards Joinville asked whether he had not heard the Abbot with more favour on account of the palfreys given the day before. Louis considered for a time, then answered, "Truly, yes." "Do you know why I asked you?" said Joinville. "Why?" said the King. "Because it is my advice to you that when you return to France you should forbid your counsellors to take presents from those who have business in your court. For be sure that, if they take



THE DEATH OF THE VIRGIN.  
FROM A THIRTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT.



them, they will hear the givers with greater attention and good will, as you have the Abbot of Cluny." Louis approved these observations at the time, and remembered them afterwards, as appeared in the instructions issued to his officers.

During his stay, having heard the fame of a Preaching Friar called Hugh, he called him to his presence. The friar came, followed by a crowd of devotees, and preached before the King a sermon which did not flatter his audience. He inveighed against the crowd of monks which he saw at Court, comparing them to fish out of water, and saying that they would be better in their cloisters, where they would live at any rate more frugally. Then turning to Louis he declared that he had read the Scriptures and also the writings of the heathen, and never found in any of them that kingdom or lordship had been lost or changed its master except through the corruption of justice. "Therefore let the King take heed when he goes to France to give his people good and speedy justice, so that our Lord may suffer him to keep his realm in peace all his life long." Louis wished to retain the preacher near him, but he refused all offers, practising his own precepts. There were other places, he said, where God would be better pleased to see him than in a king's house. He departed next day and went to Marseilles, where it was reported he worked miracles.

From Hyères the royal party travelled to Aix; thence to Beaucaire, and so northward to Paris, which was reached in September, after six years' absence. Before entering the capital they visited the

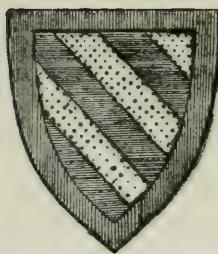
shrine of St. Denis to return thanks for their safety and make rich offerings to the church. It is related

A.D.      that the towns received them everywhere  
1254      with festivals and rejoicing, for the gladness  
              men had to see the good King and the good  
              Queen again; especially the citizens of Paris made  
such a feast as never had been made before.

Amid the general joy and salutations of his people Louis appeared sad and depressed. The time of trial, the necessity of action, that had braced his spirit and sustained his faith, was over; and he could not but reflect that he returned to his kingdom a broken and defeated man, having spent a vast treasure and wrecked a fine army to little other effect than enhancement of the power and glory of the Infidel. "If I alone bore the shame and the calamity," he replied to a bishop who reproached him for his gloom, "I could suffer it; but alas! all Christendom has been brought to confusion through me." The remonstrance, however, was not without fruit; and finding solace in the services of the Church, he resumed after a time his accustomed cheerful temper. At first he declared that his pilgrimage was not finished but put off for a season, and a cross was carried before him as he journeyed from the coast. But the postponement was fated to be long. There was much to do both at home and abroad; abuses to correct, disputes to settle, enemies to ward off or appease; matters which could not be satisfied and arranged except by assiduous care and the slow influence of time.



MANFRED, KING OF SICILY



HUGH, DUKE OF BURGUNDY

## CHAPTER IX

### FOREIGN POLICY

1254-1270

Louis remained in his kingdom and at peace for the next sixteen years, that is, to within two months of his death. During this time the French monarchy was at a height of power and reputation, both at home and in Europe, to which it had not attained since the time of Charlemagne. This may be attributed in part to the results of successful war in the two previous reigns and in the earlier years of the present. But beyond this the augmentation was owed not to any deep, designing policy of the King, nor to such eager, inexorable ambition as had animated his grandfather, but rather to the respect and veneration which was earned by the simple holiness of his life and the manifest integrity of all his actions. The consideration which he enjoyed in his lifetime and bequeathed to his descendants is a bright example of the truth that men are attracted and subdued by the sight of sanctity and moral goodness, not less than by the greatest splendour of warlike achievement. The instinct therefore was just, which led his people afterwards to regard him as the heroic type and ideal of

their rulers, so that under no title was a French King ever nearer to his subjects' hearts than as a "son of Saint Louis."

His conduct during this latter part of his reign may be considered under three heads: in respect to his dealings with other princes; in respect to domestic administration and government; and in respect to his personal life and behaviour. In all these he appears to have been impelled, inspired, and guided by the same motives and sentiments and rules and principles of action, namely, by those proper to a devout and faithful Christian. Such a character, indeed, he may be judged to have chosen and aimed at before everything else, and to have attained, as far as any man can be judged from the proofs which history affords.

A fair field for aggrandisement was opened through the disputes of the great vassals of the Crown, and the intestine quarrels which agitated so many parts of Europe at this period. It would have been possible to foment these disorders, and taking one side or the other, to draw advantage and dominion to France on several borders. But no man was ever freer than Louis from the reproach of the historian, who has said that sovereigns in general "are not so solicitous that the laws be executed, justice administered, and order preserved within their own kingdoms, as they are that all three may be disturbed and confounded amongst their neighbours; as if their religion were nothing but policy enough to make all other kingdoms but their own miserable."\* Con-

\* Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, ii., 420.

trary to this kind of policy, Louis endeavoured constantly to appease the disputes of other rulers with their subjects or with one another. Peace was his great desire for all, not only for himself: he was above all things a peacemaker. "When he heard there was war between princes outside his realm," writes a contemporary chronicler, "he sent solemn embassies to reconcile them, at great expense." "He frequently sent envoys, wise and discreet men," writes another, "to make peace and concord between his neighbours, and so bent them to agree." "He was a man," says Joinville, "who took the greatest trouble in the world to make peace between his subjects, and especially between the great men and princes in his neighbourhood." Some of his Council, it is related, deprecated his efforts, saying that if he let them go on fighting they would impoverish themselves, and be less able to attack him. "No," replied the King, "for if the princes, my neighbours, see that I leave them to fight with one another, they may take counsel together and say, 'The King leaves us to fight through malice.' So it will fall out that they will attack me on account of the hate they will bear me, and I shall be the loser, without reckoning that I shall gain God's hatred, Who says, 'Blessed are peacemakers.'"

He extinguished the war in Flanders soon after his return, of which it had been in part the cause; the more easily as the death of William of Holland deprived the House of Avesnes of their chief support. The former settlement was reaffirmed, that Hainault should fall to Avesnes

A.D.  
1256,  
Jan.

and Flanders to Dampierre. Charles of Anjou was compelled to renounce the donation of Hainault, which had brought him into the quarrel, and Sept. 24th to be content with a payment of a hundred and sixty thousand pounds, charged on the Flemish revenues of Countess Margaret, who had invited him.

A harder matter was the old dispute with the English King, which had its root in the inveterate desire of the Plantagenets to recover their continental dominion. This ambition, never eradicated, was now lulled for a time and laid to sleep, only to wake again seventy years afterwards and inflict much war and misery on France. When the King returned, Henry of England was still in Gascony, having subdued his rebels after allying himself by marriage to the King of Castile, on whose help they relied. Wishing to escape the long sea voyage, and also to see the great towns of France, which he had never visited, and the King's chapel at Paris, he asked and obtained leave to travel home that way. He came

A.D. 1254 to Orleans, being received by royal command with great pomp and festivity in the country through which he passed; thence to Chartres, where Louis met him. The Kings embraced affectionately and had much conversation together. Four sisters, the Queens of France and England, the Countesses of Cornwall and Anjou, and their mother, the Dowager of Provence, were again united in this meeting after long separation. Attended by an immense cavalcade they proceeded to Paris. The city adorned itself to welcome them and filled its streets

with music and rejoicing. Every quarter was decorated with flowers by day and illuminations at night. The University, where many English studied, suspended its lectures that the scholars might take part in the reception. Louis entertained his guest magnificently, and himself escorted him to visit the Holy Chapel and the relics and other churches of the city, where they made offerings and prayers. Afterwards they dined in public at the Old Temple.

"Never was so noble and splendid a banquet in the days of Assuer, Arthur, or Charlemagne," says the English chronicler. Louis sat in the place of honour, as first of earthly kings; England was on his right, Navarre on his left. He would have yielded the middle seat to his guest, but Henry refused it, saying, "You are my lord." Below them sat twenty-five great dukes and counts, twelve bishops, and a vast number of barons and knights. Eighteen countesses were present. All the doors stood open and unguarded, that anyone who chose might enter. After the feast the King of England distributed silver cups, silken girdles, and other presents to the French nobles. He remained eight days, admiring the buildings of Paris, the great bridge, and the houses of four stories faced with plaster. The crowds which flocked to see him flattered his pride, and were charmed by his liberality. As the King's guest, and husband of the Queen's sister, he enjoyed a reflection of their popularity and a favour among the French which he did not find at home. He was well pleased to be exalted in the eyes of his own people, whom their sovereign's triumph

gratified as their own. Before parting Louis expressed his desire to be friends, dwelling on the close kinship between their children, and lamenting that the feeling of his barons prevented him from satisfying the English claims of territorial restitution.

Though these claims delayed a complete reconciliation, the truce was maintained and prolonged, and Henry refused, after his visit, to aid John of Avesnes in Flanders. He continued, however, for some time longer to urge his rights, without any result, except that the French King took steps to strengthen his authority in Normandy, fortifying castles and towns, setting trustworthy persons in office, and marrying his Norman wards to Frenchmen. But where one party was bent on peace and the other could gain nothing by war, a way of settlement was found. A solemn embassy came from England in the autumn of 1257; the Bishops of Worcester and Winchester, Peter of Savoy, the Earls of Leicester and Norfolk and others. They recited the deprivation of his ancient rights which their master suffered; the enmity and bloodshed caused through the last fifty years, and still threatening in the future; the loss to both kingdoms, and the expediency of closing the feud, which could best be done, they said, by restoring the provinces taken from King John. The French Princes and the barons of the Council regarded such a surrender as impossible, and said so in scornful and impatient terms. But the King answered mildly that he would refer the question to his Parliament next Easter. The envoys returned, leaving the Abbot of Westminster to negotiate.



CHAMBER OF SAINT LOUIS.

FROM A FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT.



Their demand had been put forward, not in the hope that it would be granted, but to clear the way to a compromise, which Louis alone in his kingdom was ready to make. A new embassy came in the spring and brought the matter to an issue. The treaty was made at Paris. Perigord, Limousin, and part of Saintonge were restored to the English, besides the reversion of Agenais and Quercy, which being ancient dependencies of Guyenne, granted to the Counts of Toulouse, would lawfully escheat to the suzerain after the death of the Countess of Poitiers, heiress of that line. Certain payments of money were also promised on various accounts. On his part the English King renounced his claims to Normandy and all the other provinces conquered from his House; and promised to pay homage for Gascony and Guyenne. Thus at length the greater share of the Plantagenet dominions was secured to the French Crown by cession as well as conquest.

A.D.  
1258,  
May  
28th

The treaty was carried against the opposition of the French barons. Their arguments have been reported. "Sire, we marvel much that you should be willing to give up to the King of England so great a part of your lands, which you and your fathers have conquered, and which his father lost by judgment of forfeiture. For if you hold that you have no right, we think that the restitution is not good, unless you restore all that was conquered; and if you hold that you have right, we think that you lose that which you now restore." Louis replied that he knew the King of England had no right to

the land, nor did he restore it as being bound to do so. "I do it to make love between my children and his, who are first cousins. It is fitting therefore that there should be peace between them, and that the kingdoms should not be wasted any longer and men spoil and slay one another and go down into hell. Besides I gain great honour by this peace; for the King of England enters my homage and becomes my liege man, which he was not before."

In spite of this justification it may be suspected that the concession was made on a point of conscience rather than of calculation. In any case it fitted with the consistent policy of Louis, and was not disadvantageous to his Crown. The surrender of outlying territories, neither rich nor populous, was balanced by the formal recognition of the King's right over nearly all the conquests of his predecessors; by the submission of Gascony and Guyenne to his suzerainty; and by the establishment of peace with England for the first time in half a century. The claim on Normandy was a constant menace as long as it was maintained. At the moment it was little to be feared in the hands of Henry, who was incapable and troubled at home. But a wiser and more warlike successor might be more favourably placed to enforce it. The recent election of Richard of Cornwall to the Empire\* suggested the thought of a new coalition, such as had threatened to destroy Philip Augustus. It was not prudent to reckon on a continuance of weakness and division in the adversaries, or of merit and good fortune in the

\* He was elected in the beginning of 1257.

rulers of France. Two courses of policy were open ; to make a peaceful arrangement with the English King while his feebleness inclined him ; or to press the hour of advantage and drive him altogether from the realm. The latter was more dangerous and doubtful, even had it suited with the character of the King.

The treaty having been ratified, Henry crossed into France in the winter of the following year with his Queen and a great train of nobility, and spent Christmas at Paris after paying homage for his duchy of Guyenne. The rejoicings of the visit were marred by the death of Louis, heir to the French Crown, in his sixteenth year, a cause of grief to his parents and to all the world, for he was a prince of much promise. Henry assisted to bear the body to its funeral, and remained in France till the following April.

A.D.  
1259

A.D.  
1260,  
Jan-  
uary

It is related that the inhabitants of the surrendered provinces were deeply discontented at the change of rule ; and that the tradition of their resentment caused them to refuse many years afterwards to celebrate the feast-day dedicated to Louis when he died and was canonised. Be that as it may, they had good reason to complain that they were transferred from the mild and orderly dominion of the King to the weak, irregular government of Guyenne, in which oppression was tempered by turbulence.

Louis was no less pacific in dealing with his other neighbours, confirming their friendship by the

marriages of his children. He balanced the English alliance with Castile by betrothing his eldest son to the daughter of Alphonso X.; but the Prince's premature death prevented the conclusion of the marriage. The connection was renewed at the end of the reign, when the Princess Blanche was married to Ferdinand, heir of Castile, and became by him mother of the Infants of Cerda, whose misfortunes are celebrated in Spanish history.

A.D. 1255      The Kings of France and of Aragon had ancient conflicting pretensions to the suzerainty of territories lying beyond their natural boundary of the Pyrenees and surrounded by each other's dominions. Barcelona, Roussillon, and other parts of Catalonia had fallen within the Spanish March of Charlemagne, and were still asserted to be fiefs of France, which had long ceased to exercise there even the shadow of authority. On the other side the House of Aragon claimed, through inheritance or cession, lordship over Beziers, Carcassonne, and most of the county of Toulouse. They had drawn their relations with Languedoc closer in the time of the heresy, supporting the native magnates against the crusaders and receiving their homage. Since then they appeared tenacious of their right and disposed to take any opportunity of reviving it. But Languedoc was now brought by the result of war and treaty partly under the King's hand, partly under that of his brother, who had inherited Toulouse on the death of Count Raymond in 1249. The claims of Aragon were denied, but a settlement was effected in 1258. The two

Kings mutually renounced their pretensions; and to strengthen the peace a marriage was arranged between Philip, second son of Louis and King after him, and Isabel, daughter of King James of Aragon. After this treaty the friendship of the kingdoms was not broken, though it was clouded for a moment six years later by a dispute of jurisdiction. An Aragonese embassy complained that the royal seneschal of Beaucaire had cited before his court citizens of Montpellier, which their master claimed in full sovereignty. Louis did not admit the pretension, but answered graciously, expressing his regard for the King of Aragon, whose love he valued so much, he said, that rather than lose it he was willing to waive his right. He offered to suspend the action of his officer, and to submit the matter to the judgment of Cardinal Fulcodi, a Narbonese by birth. The ambassadors, who had begun by professing the greatest amity and respect, fell to reiterating and pressing their unreasonable demands, and finally uttered threats of war. But the King was not to be moved, and repeated his answer with the same graciousness as before. They departed ill content, but the conduct of their prince was more moderate than his language, and no attempt at force followed.

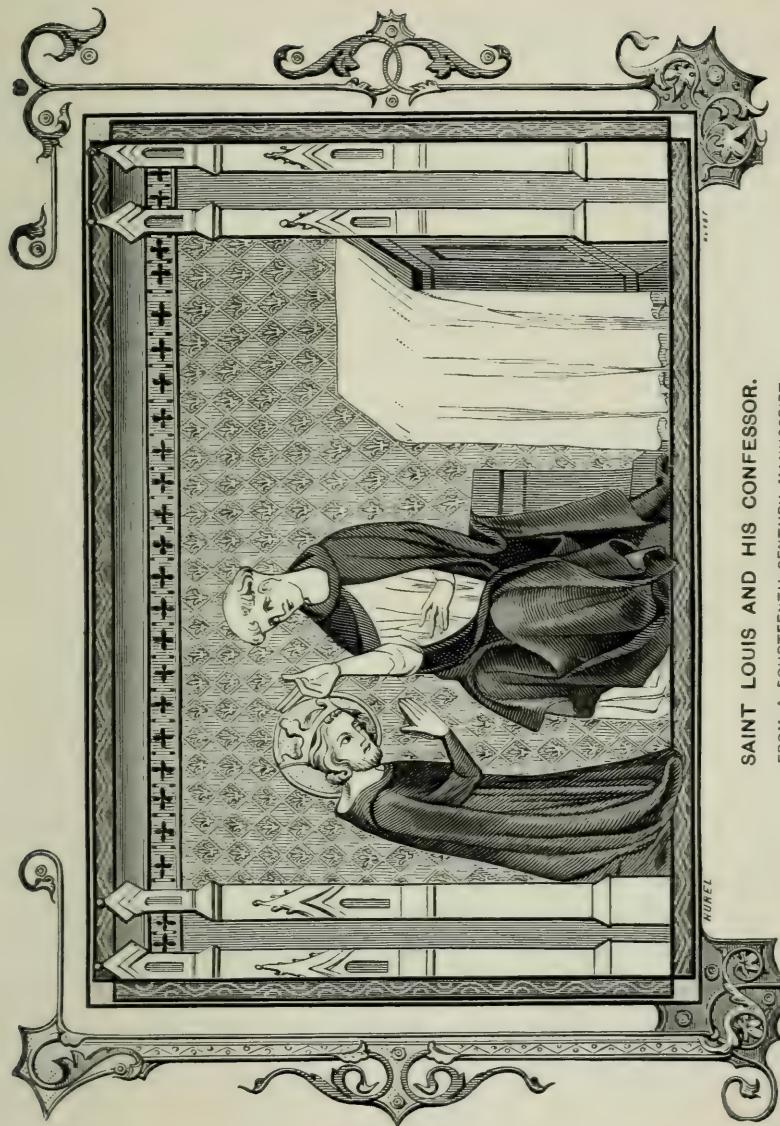
By other marriages, of his daughter Isabel to the King of Navarre, of Margaret to the heir of Brabant, and of his son John to Yolande of Burgundy, Louis strengthened and secured the borders of his realm. He did not meddle in the affairs of Germany, except to favour and support the election of Alphonso of

A.D.  
1264

Castile to the Empire, as policy demanded, since the success of the other candidate, Richard of Cornwall, would have reinforced the English connection in Europe too much for safety. But both the rivals were contented with a nominal dignity, and the German princes, without a head or union among themselves, were occupied within their own borders, and were neither friends nor enemies to France.

French neutrality, so long preserved, was infringed in the last stage of the struggle between the Popes and the House of Hohenstaufen. The hope of empire deserted that family with the death of Frederick II. and of his legitimate sons; thus far the Apostolic See was victorious. But his bastard Manfred occupied the hereditary kingdoms of Naples and Sicily; and his grandson Conradin remained alive, a seed from which the power and glory of the hated line might rise again and flourish. Unable to expel Manfred by their own force, the Popes offered his dominions to the princes of Europe at the price of conquest. Louis was too scrupulous to enforce so questionable a donation and refused it for himself or his children. Manfred indeed was in his eyes an outlaw. But the dormant right of Conradin stood in the way, and, even were that excluded, a previous acceptance by the English Prince Edmund.

Charles of Anjou was less nice, and to him Pope Urban IV. transferred the gift. He was a prince whose restless spirit and ambition overriding honesty resembled the disposition of his grandfather rather than that of his brother. He



SAINT LOUIS AND HIS CONFESSOR.  
FROM A FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT.

HUREL



had already been the cause of trouble; first by his enterprise in Flanders; then by the eagerness with which he vindicated his authority in Provence and sought to extend it over the city of Marseilles, which twice revolted against him.\* The persuasion of his wife, who saw her three sisters Queens, is said to have incited him further to seek a crown. By the Pope's support and by his brother's permission he gathered an army and treasure in France. The war was preached as a crusade, and the clergy were taxed to furnish it. He reached Italy by sea, and defeated Manfred, who was killed in battle.† But his exactions and the faults of his followers raised rebellion in the conquered kingdoms; and the young Conrardin, coming from Germany, reclaimed his inheritance in arms. Fortune deserted the bold attempt. Conrardin was beaten in the field, taken prisoner, and executed publicly at Naples together with the principal of his allies.

A.D.  
1268

Authorities differ, how far Louis gave aid or countenance to this undertaking. It is fair to say that he had not the power to command his brother, who was independent in his principality of Provence; that the business was backed by the whole authority of Rome; that, though Conrardin had rights to be respected, they were never in force. The attack was on Manfred, who had dispossessed him; and Charles could reasonably be regarded not as the invader of a legitimate sovereign, but as champion of the Church against a usurping ruler and an heretical

\* In 1257 and 1262.

† The battle of Beneventum, February 26, 1266.

and rebellious people. The King could not foresee how the matter would turn out; or that Charles, by murdering his prisoner and the lawful heir, would bring such infamy on his name as no other prince of his race has incurred.

But to put this question aside and return to the general conduct of Louis, it can be said that his justness of mind and temper, his love of peace and his strict regard for right, entitled him to become the arbitrator of all his neighbours. Returning from Palestine he found the Duke of Brittany at issue with Theobald of Navarre and Champagne, son and successor of the prince\* who has been often mentioned in this narrative. It was his first task to reconcile them. Theobald having asked his daughter in marriage, he refused to let the matter proceed till the dispute with Brittany was settled. "For it shall never be said," he declared, "that I marry my children by disinheriting my barons." When this was reported to the King of Navarre he consented to satisfy the Duke's just claim, and the marriage was thereupon concluded.

During these years the King also mediated successfully between the Count of Chalons and his son, the Count of Burgundy; between the Kings of England and Navarre; between the latter and the Count of Chalons; between the Counts of Bar and Luxemburg; the disputants in each case being persuaded to stop the predatory war which had already broken out, and to commit the settlement

\* Theobald IV. of Champagne and I. of Navarre died at Pamplona July 8, 1253.

of their differences to his decision. Even the Greek Emperor, Michael Palæologus, invited his intervention in the negotiations which he was carrying on with the Pope for the union of the Churches, offering to accept him as referee in the debate.

But the most striking proof of his reputation is afforded by the agreement of the English King and his barons to make him the judge of their quarrel. No monarch could strive to compose the affairs of his own realm with more zeal, diligence, and integrity of purpose, than Louis applied to assuaging the dissensions of a neighbouring and lately hostile state. He had already concerned himself in the matter for some years before the arbitration. At the time that the treaty of Paris was ratified, the leagued barons, who were preparing to take strong measures against the intolerable misrule of Henry and the rapacity of his foreign favourites, deputed envoys to the French King to bespeak his favour or neutrality. By the provisions passed in the Parliament of Oxford the same year they drew to themselves the chief prerogatives and authority of government. The foreigners were expelled, and crossing into France got a cold welcome from the King, who refused at first to allow them passage through his dominions. But Henry, in the visit which followed, persuaded his brother-in-law, no doubt, that he had been wronged. Louis himself had felt the encroachment of powerful vassals. He had a high opinion of kingly right, which the tradition and experience of his House taught him to regard as the bulwark of peace and order, and he

A.D.  
1258,  
May

was shocked to see it abrogated and overthrown. Accordingly, when Henry on his return repudiated the provisions of Oxford, he was promised, and received, succour from France. In the struggle of arms and intrigue which ensued Louis endeavoured on several occasions to mediate ; but the aims and interest of the opposing parties diverged too much for a settlement. It is great testimony to his fame that, in spite of the leaning he had shown towards the principle at any rate of the King's contention, the barons engaged themselves at last to accept his arbitration.

The court was held at Amiens in January of 1264. The King and Queen of England attended with their son and the Archbishop of Canterbury and others of their party ; on the other side a great number of the confederated barons. Louis heard the pleadings and arguments, and after considering them at length with his Council delivered judgment. He held that the effect of the provisions of Oxford was to deprive the King of England of his crown and whole authority. He pronounced therefore that they were null and void, the oaths which sanctioned them having been annulled already by the Pope ; that the acts done under them should be revoked ; and the castles which had been given up as their guarantee restored. That the King should appoint his own officers and council-lors ; should be free to employ foreigners if he chose without consent of the barons ; and generally should enjoy the power and prerogative which he possessed in former times. But the charters, liberties, and customs valid in England hitherto were not to be infringed. There should be a mutual amnesty and

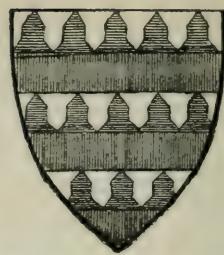
abstention from future encroachment on either side. Such a decision was to be expected from the King of France. He respected existing rights, which the provisions destroyed. He knew the evils of anarchy and the disorders of a turbulent baronage better than those which are caused by an ill-governing monarch ; and scarcely believed perhaps that his brother of England, whose prayers and almsgivings he admired so much, was rapacious, faithless, and irregular towards his subjects. Moreover, the character of his nation, opposite to the English, has always set the benefits of authority higher than those of freedom.

Fortunately for the liberties of England the barons did not abide by his verdict. He did not, however, relax his efforts for peace, or withhold his protection from either side in its hour of disaster. He assisted the fugitive English Queen with men and money ; and after the defeat of the reformers he urged and persuaded Henry to grant pardon on easy terms to the widow and sons of Simon of Montfort, their leader.

In the later years of his reign Louis was the general refuge of the injured or oppressed. The Gascons appeal to him, instead of to their own sovereign, to save them from the barons who plunder them. The merchants of Aragon, suffering from English pirates, seek and obtain redress through his intervention. The people of Burgundy and Lorraine, to whom he had given peace, "so loved and obeyed him," writes Joinville, "that I have seen them come to plead causes of dispute which they had among themselves before the King in his court at Rheims or Paris or Orleans."



THE COUNT OF FLANDERS



ENQUERRAND OF COUCY

## CHAPTER X INTERNAL AFFAIRS

1254-1270

**I**T would not be within the scope of the present work to examine at length, or with an exact inquiry into details, the constitution of government in France during this period, its nature, changes, and development; to trace the steps by which royal authority was increased; to follow the growth of the King's courts, the spread of the King's justice, and the extension of his administrative powers. Louis was little concerned in all this. His own greatness, the enhancement of his sovereign supremacy, was the last thing he aimed at. But while he desired that his people should be governed well and orderly, that justice should be done and wrong repressed and grievances remedied, his endeavours directed to this end drew after them unregarded consequences. He neither inaugurated nor even consciously developed a system of government; but taking that which was left by his predecessors carried it on in good faith and uprightness, using the power which he found in his hands for what he

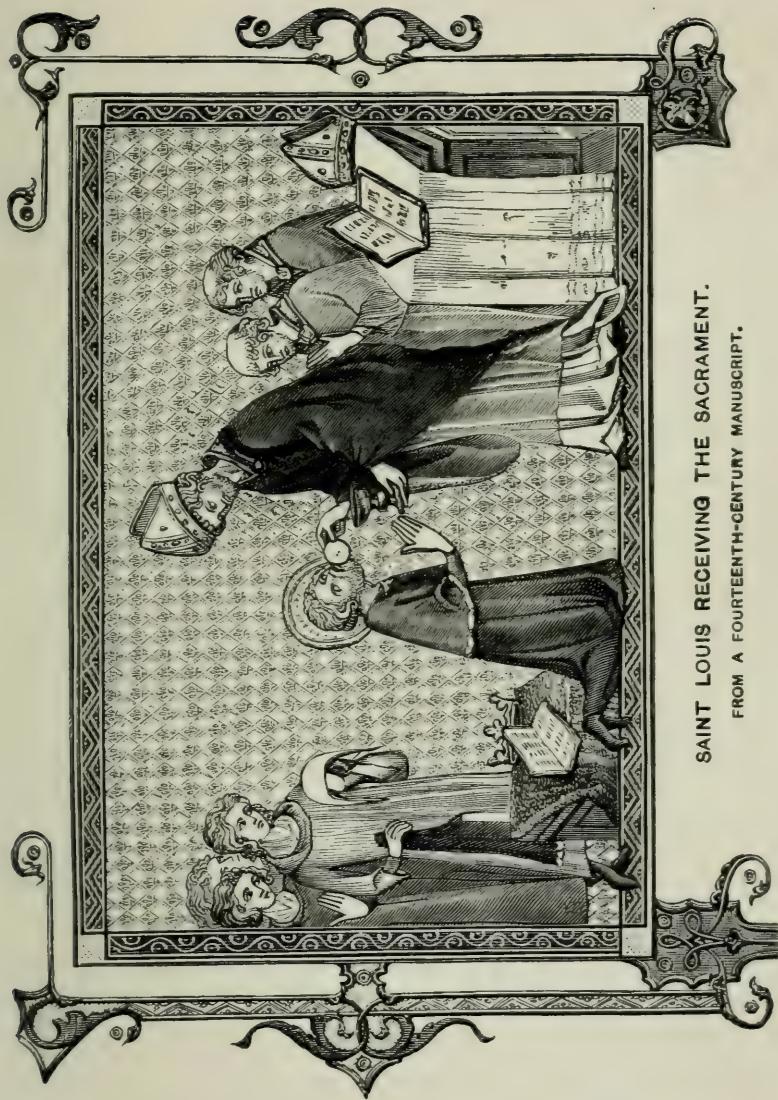
held to be the glory of God and the happiness of his subjects ; and by this means perhaps served the monarchy better than if he had set himself to increase its power and widen its effective control, without regarding the rights of others. Of his own rights he was tenacious, as became a King appointed to rule by Heaven, which he esteemed himself to be ; but did not intend or desire to stretch them beyond existing limits ; and if the plant of royal prerogative grew and flourished and sent branches abroad, it was rather due to an innate principle of life and expansion than to any care or cultivation of his.

" Fair son," he said, as he lay on a sick-bed, to his eldest son Louis, " I pray you make yourself loved by the people of your realm : for I would rather a Scotsman came from Scotland and governed them well and loyally, than that you should govern them ill." His own conduct was suited to this profession, as the words of a chronicler writing some years after his death bear witness. " Long time King Louis governed the realm of France well and in peace, like the wise and loyal man he was, without taxing the commons and townsfolk more than reason. Very rich and peaceful was France in his time."

The chief public care which occupied him was the good administration of justice, the first blessing perhaps which a strong and regular government bestows, as its corruption is the worst and most odious evil. In his reign the Parliament of France, a meeting of the great persons of the kingdom, which besides debating and advising about affairs of state used to

judge appeals and other considerable cases pertaining to the King's jurisdiction, began to be convoked regularly at Paris for the latter purpose three or four times a year, at Candlemas, Whitsuntide, and All Saints, and sometimes at the Nativity of the Virgin. This change of habit and function brought on another in the constitution of the assembly. Not only the high officers but the secretaries and privy councillors of the Crown were already accustomed to sit there by the side of prelates and barons. Being for the most part men versed in canon or civil law they drew the judicial business of Parliament into their own hands; and as this increased over the rest and the sittings were multiplied and prolonged, the magnates lay and ecclesiastic, who had no aptitude and no liking for such work, withdrew or were no longer summoned, except on special occasions when matters important to the realm or their own privileges were to be considered. The lawyers were left in possession; and Parliament started to become the supreme court of justice in France, instead of the great Council representing the powerful members of the realm.

All professional bodies, and most of all the legal, are inclined to enlarge as much as possible the range of their activity; and, with the dominance of that caste in Parliament, the scope of jurisdiction was extended by assertion of the right to hear appeals from the courts of the vassals. Such right of revision was claimed and exercised during the reign in cases from Guyenne and Brittany, to mention no others. The reputation of the King and of



SAINT LOUIS RECEIVING THE SACRAMENT.

FROM A FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT.



the councillors who directed his judgment made it the more easily allowed.

A more frequent resort to the courts was induced also by two ordinances which Louis enacted, not to that end but in his love of peace and justice. It was still the custom of the age, inherited from more lawless times, that even the lesser barons should settle their quarrels by private war and ravage of one another's land. The King limited and in the end forbade this practice, which was discouraged by the Church and a great hindrance to the prosperity of the realm. By another custom equally ancient it was allowed to either party in a suit to contest the judge's decision, appealing not to a superior court but to the issue of single combat. The origin of such duels was supposed to be in a reference to Divine judgment; but Pope Innocent IV. had already denounced them as a temptation of God. Moreover, they were frequently perverted to the advantage of the rich and powerful, who in disputes with poor or humble adversaries were able to gain the best champions to fight in their quarrel. For these reasons the King ordained with consent of his Parliament that the appeal to combat should be abolished, and cases proven by the oath of witnesses, documents, pleading, and the other customary methods. The consequence of the ordinance was that if a suitor were discontented with the verdict his only remedy lay in appeal to the higher, that is, the royal courts. It was impossible, however, to enforce these two salutary measures beyond the royal domain;

A.D.  
1249A.D.  
1260

and the first was opposed even there as an infraction of feudal privilege. The evil was repressed but by no means destroyed, and sprang up again in subsequent reigns.

Louis was present regularly at the sessions of Parliament. In addition he occupied himself continually in hearing and deciding cases and complaints, in which he was assisted by the men of experience and integrity whom he kept near him. "When he returned from chapel," writes Joinville, "he used to send for us, and seating himself on the foot of his bed, while we sat round, asked if there were any cases which we could not settle without him. When we named them, he would call the suitors before him and ask them, 'Why do you not take what my people offer you?'" When they said it was not enough he would urge them to accept a fair and reasonable compromise. "Often he went after mass to the wood of Vincennes," the writer continues, "where he sat under an oak and we round him. There all who had business came to speak to him without hindrance. Then he asked, 'Has anyone a suit?'; and those who had suits rose up. Then he said, 'Keep quiet and your cases shall be judged in order.' Then he called my lord Peter des Fontaines and my lord Geoffrey de Villete and said to one of them, 'Judge me this case.' And when he saw anything to amend in the pleading of those who spoke, whether on his own side or another's, he would amend it out of his own mouth. I have seen him in summer-time come to his garden in Paris to deliver judgments, dressed in a coat of camlet and a stuff

surcoat without sleeves, with a scarf of black cendal round his shoulders, well combed and unbonneted, wearing a cap with a white peacock's feather on his head. He had a carpet laid for us to sit round him, and all the people came who had business before him. There he caused judgments to be rendered in the same way I have told you of in the wood of Vincennes."

Louis gave these public audiences twice a week, that access might not be denied to the poorest. He stood for the weak against the strong and for others against himself, sometimes arguing on the opposite side when crown cases were heard, that the judges might be less disposed to twist the law in his favour. His justice knew no respect of persons. "Toward greater misdeeds," we are told, "he showed himself stern and inflexible, however high the offender." If it was one of his own household he was careful to punish the crime more severely than usual. More than once he curbed the arbitrary dealing of his brother Charles. In particular the case of a knight is related, whom the Count of Anjou had condemned in his court, on his own suit, and had thrown into prison because he appealed to the King. Louis hearing of it summoned Charles and gave him a rebuke. "I will teach you," he said, "that there is only one King in France. Do not think that because you are my brother I will spare you in any injustice." He caused the knight to be released, assigned him advocates to plead his cause, and after full trial broke the former sentence.

From such impartial rigour lesser culprits could

not hope to escape. A woman of high rank in Pontoise, who was condemned, according to law, to be burned for murdering her husband, was unable to obtain a reprieve. Though the Queen herself begged that at least the execution might be in private, Louis refused, being advised by Simon of Nesle that good justice must be public justice. Simon remembered, perhaps, that when there had been a question of executing one of his own vassals secretly, to avoid scandal, on the request of his kinsmen, the King had declared that he would have justice done on criminals throughout his realm openly and in face of the people. The Count of Joigny, who seized a townsman for some offence and refusing to surrender him to the royal justice threw him into a dungeon where he died, was himself imprisoned. John Britaut, accused of killing the son of a poor knight with whom he had a quarrel, was kept in prison for a year, spite of his riches and many friends, till an inquiry into the case could be concluded; nor would Louis deliver him to the Count of Champagne, who also claimed jurisdiction, fearing lest justice might be overcome in another court by the same influences which had assailed it in his own.

The case of Enguerrand of Coucy, son of the Enguerrand who had plotted against the Crown, made more noise, owing to the eminence of the A.D. culprit. Three Flemish boys of noble birth, 1259 who were being educated in a neighbouring abbey, having gone out to shoot rabbits with bow and arrow were led by their sport to trespass on the

woods of Coucy. They were caught by the foresters; and Enguerrand ordered them to be hanged without inquiry or trial. The abbot and their kinsmen complained to the King, who cited Enguerrand before his Parliament at Paris. He came demanding to be judged by his peers. But the House of Coucy, which in its pride of birth and power scorned the support of rank, was proved to have alienated to a younger branch the fiefs which carried its barony. The demand was rejected therefore; Enguerrand was arrested, not by nobles or knights, but by the yeomen of the household, and confined in the tower of the Louvre. A day was fixed for his trial. The magnates of the realm, who esteemed him their equal and were for the most part allied to his blood, gathered to attend. Among them came the King of Navarre, the Dukes of Brittany and Burgundy, the Counts of Bar and Blois and Soissons, the Archbishop of Rheims, and the Countess of Flanders. When the court assembled and the case was heard Enguerrand could not deny the facts. Leave was given him to withdraw and consult with his kinsmen. As he went out nearly all the princes and barons rose and followed; the King was left alone with his privy councillors. By advice of his supporters the prisoner demanded the ordeal of battle, through the mouth of John of Thorote. It was refused on the ground that precedent excluded it, where one party so much exceeded the other in power and position. The Duke of Brittany insisted, but was reminded that he had been of a different opinion when his own vassals, appealing to

the royal court, had offered a similar challenge. Louis was at first inclined to pronounce sentence of death. But he was turned from this by his own doubts and the prayers of the barons, who could none of them be brought to give an opinion on the case, but only urged the need of mercy. He condemned Enguerrand to pay a fine of ten thousand pounds; to build chapels and endow masses for the souls of the murdered; to lose his rights of high justice and forestry; and to pass three years in a crusade. The last penalty was commuted by the King's consent for a payment of twelve thousand pounds towards the succour of Palestine.

"This affair was a great example of justice to other kings," writes a chronicler, "seeing that a man of such noble lineage, accused by poor and simple folk, barely escaped with his life before the lover and upholder of right." But the wrath of the barons was great. "The King will do well to hang us all," said John of Thorote among them. The words were reported to Louis, who sent for and questioned him. "How say you, John? That I will hang my barons? Assuredly I will not hang them, but I will chastise them if they do evil."

It was natural they should murmur at so unusual an assertion of justice over privilege; for a common interest made them jealous of interference even with abuses of the power which their order possessed. The note of their discontent is sounded again in ballads of the time denouncing the attempt to abolish trial by battle. But though particular points might touch them on the raw, the King's general



RELATIVES OF THE MURDERED BOYS DEMANDING  
JUSTICE FROM THE KING.

FROM A FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT.



conduct compelled their respect. They recognised that his aim was single ; and could not but acknowledge that he was even tender to their claims, except where the interests of justice required strict enforcement of his own. On many occasions he checked the zeal of his officers in different parts of the realm, when they seemed to be stretching their jurisdiction or pressing a doubtful right of the Crown against a neighbouring lord or prelate or township. What struck even more the eye of contemporaries was the disregard he showed of his immediate personal profit or comfort, if equity lay in the other scale. They relate with admiration that when Matthew of Trie claimed the county of Dammartin, and adduced in support a royal charter from which the seal was broken away, though the Council declared the instrument invalid, the King, seeing it to be genuine, refused to press a technical flaw, and gave judgment for the suitor. And again, when the noise of brawlers in a tavern at Vitry disturbed his devotions, he would not stop them till he had made inquiry and found that the justice of the place belonged to himself.

So much for the question of justice. Now to turn to a hardly less important aspect of government and consider the instruments through which it worked. Louis used all efforts to secure the integrity of his officials, by care in selection, by strictness of instruction, and by anxiety to discover and remove offenders. “ He took the greatest pains,” it is written, “ to find faithful and discreet men, of good conversation and repute, and above all with clean hands; and of

such he made his bailiffs and seneschals; and if they behaved well in their office, promoted them to be his friends and councillors." Immediately after his return to France he issued the celebrated A.D. ordinance containing instructions to his 1254 bailiffs, viscounts, provosts, and other officers, greater and less, which by its rules and prohibitions anticipates very many of the precautions which the experience of later ages has judged expedient to be taken against the abuse of administrative authority. Among numerous provisions designed to prevent and abolish common grievances of the governed, those relating to the personal conduct of officials are particularly full and explicit. It was wisely considered, no doubt, that self-interest is the chief cause of misrule; that motive being put out of action, there is little temptation remaining to the magistrate or the tax-collector to depart from the standard of fairness between man and man.

It is enacted that the bailiffs and other officials shall swear solemnly and publicly on taking up their posts that they will receive no presents of gold or silver or benefices or anything else from those in their jurisdiction, except gifts of fruit, bread, and wine of a value less than ten shillings in one week; and that they will not allow their wives or children or relations or servants to accept such presents. Especially that they will receive nothing from those who have or are about to have suits to plead before them. Similarly that they will not borrow above the sum of twenty pounds and will discharge the debt within two months. That they will give no

presents to any of the King's councillors, or to those appointed to inspect their accounts, or to the travelling commissioners of inquest: and that the inferior officials will give none to their superiors. That they will faithfully judge and punish their subordinates if they find them to be guilty of plunder or usury or other misdemeanour, and will not screen or support them in any way.

Bailiffs are also forbidden to buy or acquire land in their province without express permission; otherwise the land bought is to escheat to the Crown. Without special leave in each case they are not to marry their sons or daughters or kinsmen or kinswomen to any person of their province; nor to procure them any benefice of the Church there. These restrictions as to marriage and the acquisition of land not to apply to officers of lower rank. Further provisions declare that the King's officials of the higher degrees shall abstain from profane swearing, from dicing, and haunting taverns; and that they shall not maintain a multitude of beadle and yeomen, lest the people be oppressed. Finally it is provided that all bailiffs, viscounts, provosts, and mayors after quitting their office shall remain for forty days, in person or by procurators, within the sphere of its exercise, so as to answer before their successors to all complaints which may be lodged against them.

It is the recognised infirmity of any administrative machine that, however excellent the principles of its construction, however careful the choice of material, however wise the rules which govern its working, nothing can hinder the insidious creeping

in of stagnation or abuse or both, but the flow of searching and even captious inquiry and criticism from outside, and that armed with authority and the power of punishment. As the royal rule extended and multiplied its springs and levers of action, the danger would have grown of the instruments playing false and running out of gear, had it not been prevented by constant examination and repair. The commissioners of inquest have been mentioned. Such officers had been sent over the realm, in former reigns as well as this, upon rare occasions, to inquire into and correct the abuses of government for example, immediately before the crusade. But after his return the King appointed them frequently and regularly, choosing with great care, it is related, sometimes friars, sometimes lawyers, sometimes knights, who travelled through the domain once a year or oftener, to investigate the conduct of bailiffs and royal officials, and if they found them doing wrong, to remove them from their places and punish them. An instance of their action is given in the case of the bailiff of Amiens, who had become very rich through malversation, but was deprived, imprisoned, and forced to make restitution by the sale of all he possessed ; so that when the King at last set him free he had barely a horse to ride on.

It was the general usage at this time for places of office and authority under the Crown to be bought and sold ; their emoluments being considered as a property vested in the holder, for the loss of which he expected to be compensated by his successor. Louis in his ordinance mentioned above put several restric-

tions on this kind of traffic, which was liable to bear evil fruits. In one case, where the harm was notorious, he abolished the custom. The provostship of Paris, an office of high importance, used to pass to the highest bidder. The purchaser recouped himself by selling justice to the rich, and by allowing his kinsfolk and friends to commit all sorts of outrages with impunity. Frightful disorder was the consequence. Joinville says that on account of the rapine and injustice the common people did not dare to remain on the King's ground, but went to dwell in other neighbouring lordships. The Provost's court was emptied of suitors, and all Paris was full of thieves and criminals. Louis was aware of the evil, and after in vain trying to enlist the help of the Bishop and Chapter, who shared the jurisdiction of the city, took the correction of it into his own hands. He ordered that the provostship should be sold no longer, and attached a great wage to the office. Then he searched France for a just and stern man, who would not spare the rich more than the poor. Such an one was found in Stephen Boileau, who was appointed, and so behaved himself, says Joinville, that no malefactor or robber or murderer could stay in Paris but was hanged at once; friends or rank or money could not save him. The new Provost shewed an almost Roman virtue, executing his own godson and one of his dearest friends for crimes they had committed. The people returned and came more than ever to live in the King's lordship on account of the good justice which they got there, so that the tax on sales and the other revenue grew to double its former amount.

The relations of the monarchy with the Church have been touched upon in former chapters. Disputes similar to those there instanced continued to spring up in various provinces at intervals of time; but the strife never came to such a head of bitterness as before the crusade. The King's behaviour showed both moderation and firmness. His affection to the Church was beyond doubt, and his fondness for religious persons has been remarked. They were always powerful in his counsels: four of his ministers became Cardinals, and two of them Popes.\* But the just and level balance of his mind no less than the traditions of the regency saved him from that subservience to ecclesiastical interests into which the fatal piety of monarchs has sometimes fallen. At the same time the general opposition of the barons to clerical claims, in which the royal officers throughout the kingdom joined heartily of their own accord, enabled him often to play his favourite part of mediator; and, as protector and head of temporal authority, to arrange a compromise with the Pope, who represented the spiritual power. Thus extreme measures of interdict on the one side and forfeiture on the other were avoided or annulled: a more reasonable spirit was imposed on the disputants; and the particular matter of quarrel was frequently referred to inquiry and arbitration. Nevertheless the King maintained steadily, even against papal

\* Raoul, Bishop of Evreux and Cardinal of Alba; Henry, Archbishop of Embrun; Guy Fulcodi, Archbishop of Narbonne, afterwards Pope Clement IV.; Simon, treasurer of Saint Martin of Tours, afterwards Pope Martin II.

remonstrance, the essentials of his position; the competence of the civil courts in civil matters; the royal control over prelates in respect of their temporalities; and the right of presentation to benefices. The last was the more jealously guarded as he was extremely anxious and careful that none but fit persons should be presented. He kept a list of deserving clergy, whose learning or piety he had noted, and set his face against the common habit of plurality, refusing to give anyone a benefice unless he resigned that which he held already.

He stood fast also, as Joinville relates, by the resolution taken in the earlier years of the reign to oppose the abuse of excommunication. The bishops of France made complaint, the Bishop of Auxerre being spokesman, that many excommunicated persons refused stubbornly to satisfy the Church, and so died in their sins; by which Christianity, they said, took great hurt. They desired the King therefore to command his officers to seize the goods of all who had remained excommunicate for a year and a day, in order to compel them to get themselves absolved. Louis replied that he would do this, if after proper inquiry such persons were found to be in the wrong. The bishops demurred: it was not the King's concern, they said, to inquire into cases which ecclesiastical courts had decided. He flatly refused to allow his officers to act on any other condition, declaring that it would be against God and against reason to force people to get absolution, if it was the clergy who were in the wrong. "I will give you an instance," he added, "in the

Count of Brittany.\* He was excommunicated by the bishops of Brittany for full seven years: then the court of Rome absolved him and condemned them. If I had forced him to get absolution after the first year I should have sinned against God and against him."

Louis owed a debt of gratitude to the towns of his kingdom which he repaid by giving them good government and security in their liberties and immunity from undue taxation more than by any special extension of their privileges. Indeed the authority and interference of the Crown, in matters of justice and finance and in the election of magistrates, was more active in the municipalities than it had ever been before. But the power was used for good ends, order and economy, and its exercise was not unwelcome. The King enjoyed a high respect and popularity among the citizen classes of his subjects, who held him with reason to be their friend. He was steadily favourable towards them, from motives, as it appears, of policy no less than of equity and beneficence. He abolished, at the prayer of the inhabitants, a number of unjust or inconvenient customs which had grown up in this town or that; and instituted others for the ease and encouragement of trade. In particular he is recorded to have made regulations to protect the transactions of foreign merchants; so that great numbers of them brought their wares into France, by which the country was enriched. But perhaps his most useful measure in

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\* That is John, son of Peter.

this direction was the reform of the coinage, a matter to which he was very attentive. Many different coinages circulated in the realm; for it was a prerogative not only of the magnates but of lesser barons to strike their own. The multitude of standards, the variation of values, the frequency of debasement were great impediments to commerce. Louis worked to establish a uniform coinage,—the royal,—to regulate it on a suitable scale, and to fix its value. He would never use any but his own money; and made an ordinance nine years after his return providing that royal money alone should circulate in the domain, and that elsewhere it should pass equally with that of the lord of the place. Severe penalties were added against clippers and coiners. To increase its authority the ordinance was countersigned by deputies on behalf of the citizens of Paris, Orleans, Sens, Laon, and Provins.

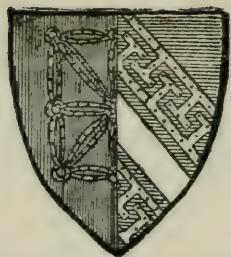
A.D.  
1263

At the close of reviewing the King's public behaviour it will not be out of place to repeat from the written instructions which he left to his successor those parts which deal with the conduct to be observed by the Prince towards his own subjects, the Church, and other rulers. The following precepts are extracted from the document as it has been handed down by several contemporary writers in terms that differ a little from one another according to the variety of copies:

“ Dear son, maintain the good customs of your realm and abolish the bad. Do not be covetous with your

people, nor lay tax nor toll on them except through great necessity. Be faithful and stern to do justice to your subjects, without turning to the right hand or the left. Uphold the plaint of the poor against the rich, until the truth be declared. If any man has a suit against you, speak for him and against yourself, till the truth is known ; for so your councillors will be bolder in judging for you or against you, according to right. If you hold aught belonging to another, having got it yourself or from your ancestors, if the thing is certain, restore it without delay ; if it is doubtful, make careful inquiry quickly through wise men. Take thought how your people and subjects may live in peace and justice under you. Especially guard the good towns and communes of your realm in the state and franchise in which your ancestors guarded them ; and if there is anything to amend, amend it ; and hold them in favour and love ; for through the force and riches of the great towns your subjects and strangers will fear to do you wrong, especially your peers and barons. Honour and love all persons belonging to Holy Church, and see that they are not deprived of the gifts and alms which your ancestors bestowed on them. Give the benefices of Holy Church to godly persons of clean life, acting therein according to the advice of prudent and pious men. Keep yourself from making war against Christian men without much counsel ; and if it befalls that you must make war, guard Holy Church and those who have not sinned against you. If wars and quarrels arise between your subjects, appease them as quickly as you can. Be careful to have good provosts and bailiffs ; and often make inquiry about them and about your household, how they behave themselves, and whether there is any vice of covetousness or falseness or knavery among them.

Labour that all naughty sins may be removed from the earth : especially suppress naughty oaths and heresy with all your power. Take care that the expenses of your household are reasonable."



THEOBALD, KING OF NAVARRE



JOHN OF JOINVILLE

## CHAPTER XI

### PERSONAL LIFE

1254-1270

In the two preceding chapters we have considered the conduct of the prince and the governor, and have seen how it commended itself, and how deservedly, to the judgment of the world. But the King's religion and virtue received even more praise from his contemporaries than did his peacefulness and wisdom and justice: the qualities of the monarch were excelled by those of the saint. His faith and charity, his devotion and gentleness and temperance and humility in daily life, are the theme of all his biographers, four of whom may be mentioned whose opportunities of knowledge and acquaintance cannot be denied. The most celebrated is John of Joinville, the seneschal of Champagne, who followed Louis in his crusade and lived much with him after his return. Godfrey of Beaulieu, the King's confessor during the last twenty years of his life, and William of Chartres, his almoner, who was with him in captivity and at his death, have both written biographies turning more on his private than public

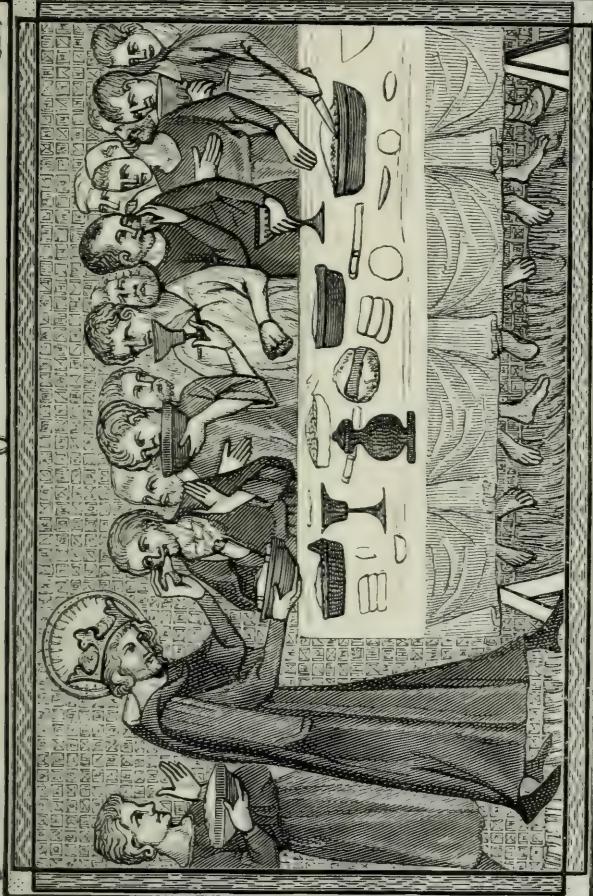
actions. There is also a life of the same description by an anonymous writer, who was confessor for eighteen years to Queen Margaret, and afterwards to her daughter Blanche. It would be tedious and fulsome to repeat all the laudations and anecdotes of these authors, the truth of which nevertheless there is seldom any reason to doubt. It will be sufficient to attempt to draw from them and from other sources some account of the King's disposition and habits during this latter part of his reign, to which period their narratives, with the exception of Joinville's, for the most part refer.

From his earliest years Louis had been inclined to goodness, but after the unhappy issue of the crusade the activity and fervour of his piety increased. He felt that the supreme and crowning enterprise, as he deemed it, of a Christian King had slipped his grasp; and he turned from the holy quest which was denied him to a more strict and assiduous fulfilment of the lesser duties that remained, as if therein he hoped to be able to forget, and perhaps to atone for, the great failure with which he reproached himself. To use the image of his confessor, his new and holy behaviour after the return from Palestine excelled his former by as much as gold is more precious than silver.

He was conspicuous in charity to the poor and miserable; six score poor were fed from his table every day wherever he went, and more in Lent and Advent. Three times a week in those seasons he served thirteen of them with bread, soup, and meat or fish from his own hands, before eating himself;

and sometimes the whole number. Besides this he continually bestowed large gifts of food, clothing, and money. His donation to the friars and nuns of the mendicant orders alone amounted to seven thousand pounds a year, besides cloth and shoes, and sixty thousand herrings each Lent. "He gave in addition more alms than can be counted," says Joinville, "to poor monks, to poor sick, to hospitals and almshouses, to poor gentlemen and women, to fallen women, to poor widows and those who were lying in of child, to poor workmen who through old age or sickness could not pursue their trade." Nor did this exhaust his liberality. He raised and endowed hospitals at Paris, Pontoise, Compiègne, and Vernon, himself superintending the building and ordering the arrangement of the rooms; also a house for three hundred blind men at Paris, and another for reformed prostitutes, that they might be able to escape from sin.

It is related that there were some who blamed the great expenses of his charity. "Better be extravagant in almsgiving for the love of God," replied Louis, "than on vain and worldly show." After the crusade he ceased to wear cloth of green or scarlet, or plumes, or rich furs; but that the poor, who received his cast-off garments, might not lose by the change, he added sixty pounds each year to the sum distributed in alms. He would use no gold or silver bridles or rich trappings for his horses, and no gold or silver plate at his own table. Nevertheless he kept up the splendour which his dignity required. Not only were solemn occasions, such as the visit



HUYOT.

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SAINT LOUIS MINISTERING TO THE POOR.

FROM A FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT.



of the English King, suitably honoured, but at all times he maintained his household on a scale which was thought liberal, and even magnificent; and showed fitting largess and hospitality at the sessions of Parliament and assemblies of his barons. The service of his Court, we are told, was much more seemly, abundant, and noble than that of any of his ancestors.

Louis built neither castles nor palaces for his own state and pleasure: he is said to have disapproved of that favourite and most devouring expense of princes. Happily his patronage was not lost to the architecture of France, which was then in the spring of its strength and beauty, having alone, as yet, among the greater arts risen again out of the ruin of the ancients and developed beyond the feebleness of infancy. Cathedrals and churches and abbeys sprang up over the kingdom, many by royal munificence and aid, many by that of rich barons who were moved to imitate the pious example of their sovereign. "As a writer having made his book," says the chronicler, "illumines it with gold and azure, so the King illuminated his realm with the fair abbeys which he built therein." There was a general activity in religious building; the cathedrals of Amiens, Rheims, and Beauvais, to name a few out of many, were partly or wholly constructed in this reign. Royaumont and the Holy Chapel have been mentioned; the nave and transept of Saint Denis was another work due to the King's direct impulse; besides numerous convents, mostly for the orders of Saint Dominic and Saint Francis, whose austere rule

and comparative simplicity of life Louis held in high affection and esteem.

"He loved," it is said, "all persons who devoted themselves to the service of God and wore the garb of religion." To his confessor he behaved with the utmost deference and submission; and caused the table of his chaplains to be placed higher than his own. When he stayed at Royaumont or some other abbey, as he often did, he would join the monks in their tasks and meals and devotions and studies, serving at their tables, chanting the offices, listening to an exposition of the Scriptures, living and faring in all ways like the meanest brother of the order, except that he showed more humility. Some years after his return it appears that he formed the design of abdicating the crown to his son and retiring to a monastery. He was dissuaded with difficulty by the Queen, to whom first he disclosed his purpose. She prevailed in the end by force of entreaty, pleading the public interest and pointing to the unripe years of the Prince and the evils which had attended the King's own minority.

This side of his conduct, though approved by those whose opinion was best worth having, did not escape some stricture in an age when the regular clergy were too liable to the jealousy and dislike of a large body of people. An incident is related which shows at once the reproaches to which he was exposed, and the patience with which he bore them. A certain woman who was pleading in his court cried out to him one day as he came to take his seat: "Fie! Fie! shouldest thou be King of France?"

Better another than thou, for thou art naught but one of the Preaching friars, and a clerk and a shaving. Great evil it is that thou art King, and great wonder that thou art not thrust forth from the realm." Louis heard her out, then answered smiling, "Assuredly you say sooth; I am not worthy to be King; and, if it had been God's pleasure, it would be better another should be so, who knew better how to govern the realm"; and was so far from resenting an insult which most rulers of his time would have punished with savage cruelty that he forbade the yeomen to touch her or put her out of the court, and afterwards sent one of his chamberlains to console her grievances with a present of money.

But if he could not become a monk in name and profession he led a life as severe and self-denying, and almost as assiduous in prayer and fasting and penance, as if he had been immured in a cloister under the most rigid rule of austerity. It was his custom to rise before dawn to hear matins in his chapel, going and returning in silence so as not to wake the knights who slept in his chamber. In the evening he heard complines, and during the day two masses or more according to the season, and also the Canonical Hours and the Hours of the Virgin chanted. If he were abroad on horseback he would go through the latter at the usual time in a low voice with his chaplain. If he were travelling and found no chapel the services were said in his own apartment. Even when he was sick he would have them held by his bedside. Some nobles complained that he wasted so much time in hearing masses and

sermons. "If I spent double as much," he retorted, "in playing dice, or in hunting and fowling, nothing would be said of it." He prayed alone often and earnestly, crying for the "gift of tears," in which, as he sadly admitted to his confessor, he was deficient, and rejoiced to feel them run down his cheeks. He knelt at his devotions on the bare stone in summer and winter, and lay on a plank bed covered only with a cloth. Every Friday he fasted, in Advent and Lent on bread and water alone. On Fridays he confessed, and received discipline from his confessor with a small scourge, which he always carried in an ivory case concealed in his dress. Similar scourges he gave to his children and particular friends, "that they might receive discipline at the fitting time and place." He submitted to every penance which his confessor imposed, and laid others on himself, such as wearing a hair shirt once a week in Advent and Lent, and fasting more often and more severely than the Church enjoined. These austerities injured his feeble health, and after falling dangerously ill he was induced to relax them in some degree.

Not only on Fast days but at all seasons he observed moderation and abstinence in food and drink. "I never heard him," says Joinville, "planning new dishes, as many rich men do." He would never eat of the most dainty dishes which were set on his table, nor a fruit or fish the first time it appeared in its season, but sent such things down to the poor. He mixed water with his wine, and purposely spoilt in the same way any rich and savoury sauce which was served to him. In Lent he abstained from wine



SAIN T LOUIS SUBMITTING TO  
SCOURGING.

SAIN T LOUIS FEEDING  
A LEPER.



altogether, and drank beer instead, which he disliked. The spirit of humility and mortification enjoined on Christians led him to wash the feet of poor beggars. He did this regularly every week, not from ostentation, for he kept it as secret as possible, and is related to have chosen blind men most often for the purpose, that they might not know who he was. In the same spirit he fed the infirm poor at table with his own hand, causing three such to sit always by his chair. He often visited the hospitals, and there and elsewhere ministered to the meanest wants of the sick, especially of lepers and those afflicted with other loathsome diseases from whom everyone else shrank. But this also he did in private as far as he could, and sometimes refrained lest he might shock or annoy barons who were present and not well acquainted with his habits.

These ascetic rigours did not harden his temper or destroy the natural gaiety of his disposition, as may be judged from one of the penances which he laid on himself, "not to laugh on a Friday if he could help it." "He had a pleasant manner of speech seasoned with wit," writes one of his biographers, "and was very fond of conversation, saying that nothing was so good after a meal." Stage-players he abhorred, and took no great delight in songs and ballads. But when rich lords who were his guests brought their own minstrels, as was the fashion, to amuse the company with reciting and playing on the harp, he listened courteously. He was an affable and agreeable host, and took especial trouble to entertain strangers. He was familiar with his friends,

waiving the privileges of his rank and disdaining all ceremonious etiquette; in his intimate letters he did not style himself King, but Louis of Poissy—the place where he was born and baptised.

We are told that he seldom ate in company of the barons, but had a keen desire for the acquaintance of honourable and modest men. Renowned doctors and scholars frequented his court and table, among whom may be named Robert of Sorbonne and Saint Thomas Aquinas. In conversation he would speak of the vicissitudes of his reign, especially of the incidents of his crusade and captivity, always expressing thankfulness for the Divine mercy which had been signally manifested to him on many occasions. Sometimes discussion appears to have turned on questions of theology, on the working of Providence in the world, or on the minor points of ethics, the comparative value of different qualities, and how men ought to behave in particular circumstances. Joinville has related one passage on a lighter topic, which is worth repeating for the witness it bears to the King's consideration of the feelings of others. It happened at Corbeil as they were walking in a meadow after dinner. Robert of Sorbonne, between whom and the seneschal there was frequently a war of words, attacked him about the dress he was wearing. "If the King sat down and you sat in a higher place, would you not be to blame?" "Yes," said Joinville unsuspectingly. "Then you are much to blame for clothing yourself more richly than the King; for you are wearing green cloth and fur, which he never does." This made Joinville angry

and he retorted ; “ Master Robert, saving your grace, I am not to blame if I clothe myself in green cloth and fur, for that dress was left me by my parents. But you are to blame, for you who are a serf’s son have abandoned the dress of your parents and wear finer cloth than the King.” “ And I took the lappel of his surcoat and that of the King,” the narrator goes on, “ and said, ‘ See if it is not true.’ Then the King began to speak for Master Robert and to defend him with all his might.” Afterwards he called Joinville and some others apart, “ and said that he had called me to confess that he was wrong in his defence of Master Robert. ‘ But,’ said he, ‘ I saw him so confused that he needed my aid. But let none of you stick at what I said in defending him ; for, as the seneschal says, you should dress well and neatly, and your wives will love you the better for it, and your people respect you more. As the Sage has said, a man’s clothing and armour should be such that grave men will not call it too rich, nor young men call it too mean.’ ”

The same kindness of heart shone through his whole behaviour and endeared him to his acquaintance and following. “ There was something in the mere sight of him,” writes Godfrey of Beaulieu, “ that found a way to the hearts and affections of all.” He was extraordinarily patient with his servants and those of his household, never speaking harshly to the lowest footboy except for a grave fault, and passing over or pardoning omissions or carelessness which, as he said himself to one who dropped burning grease on him from a candle, his grandfather

would have punished with dismissal at the least. He is related however on one occasion to have lost his temper and beaten a lazy squire, justifying himself by the necessity of making some distinction between good servants and bad. He could not bear to hear slanderous tales against anyone. Those whom he wished to rebuke or admonish he called aside and spoke to in private, or with only his confessor present; as in the case of a lady of the Court who was notorious for her extravagance in dress and ornament, but by the King's gentle exhortations was brought to amend her ways.

His leniency to faults against himself was contrasted with an uncommon severity towards some sins which the world is generally disposed to condone, in particular those of impurity and blasphemy. Offences of this kind, which do not seem to inflict any direct and definite injury on society, are left as a rule to the punishment of Heaven; but Louis in his great zeal for the honour of God and the salvation of his people's souls discountenanced and repressed by such means as lay in his power practices which were harmful to both. He was not only strictly continent in his own life, but exacted the same virtue from his attendants and urged it upon his nobles. Several of the latter were persuaded by him to put away their concubines or to marry them and live cleanly; while dissolute habits if discovered in the royal household were rewarded with instant dismissal and sometimes with further penalties.

"He was much troubled," says his confessor, "by

the general plague and vice of shameful oaths and blasphemies against God and the Saints which from old times had specially afflicted his realm." Joinville adds his testimony. "I never heard him name the Devil, except in reading some book, such as the lives of the Saints, where it was necessary. That name has great currency through the kingdom, and it is great disgrace to France and to the King who suffers it, that men can hardly speak a word without saying 'Devil take him!' It is a grievous fault of the tongue to devote to the Devil men and women who have been given to God in their baptism. In my house of Joinville he who uses such words gets a buffet or a stroke from a stick, and thereby this bad language is almost entirely put down." The evil was so notorious that the Pope interested himself in its suppression, committing the matter to his Legate, Simon, Cardinal of Saint Cecilia, by whose advice the King called a Parliament of prelates and barons at Paris in 1264, in which an ordinance was passed for the punishment of public blasphemers by fine, pillory, or imprisonment, according to the gravity of their offence; and in gross cases by burning in the tongue. The last penalty was enforced some time after against a burgess of Paris. The severity excited many murmurs, by which Louis was unmoved. He declared that he would willingly be burned in the tongue himself if he could only extirpate this wicked habit of his people: and when a benefit which he conferred on the city renewed his popularity with the Parisians, remarked that he expected a greater reward in Heaven on account of

their former curses than from the blessings which they now bestowed.

His harshness in this respect sprang from the belief which he shared with his contemporaries that it was the duty of a pious ruler to punish disobedience to the laws of God and outrage against his majesty equally with that offered to human decrees and dignities. To a similar cause must be attributed his active dislike of unbelievers. He held heretics in horror: happily there was no occasion in the latter part of the reign for any persecution of such. He refused in Egypt to endure the presence of a renegade. "Jews he hated so much that he could not bear to look on them," says William of Chartres. The same writer describes his general attitude towards the oppressed race. "He would not take any of their goods for his own use, and declared that they should not be allowed to practice usury but must get their living by trade or labour." When it was represented to him that there must be usury, and that being destructive to salvation it was better it should be practised by Jews, who were damned in any case, than by Christians, Louis answered that Christian usurers might be dealt with by the ecclesiastical courts which had jurisdiction over them, but that the Jews were his affair and he would not have them poison France with usury under his protection. "Let them give it up or go from my land."

A.D.      had already during the stay in Palestine or  
1253      dered them to be expelled from the royal domain, and the edict was enforced after his return against all who continued obstinate. Diligent

inquiry was made in order that the confiscated property of the condemned might be restored to those from whom it had been plundered. The King however was not content only to punish Jews, but worked to convert them with a charity unusual at the time ; and in a few cases succeeded.

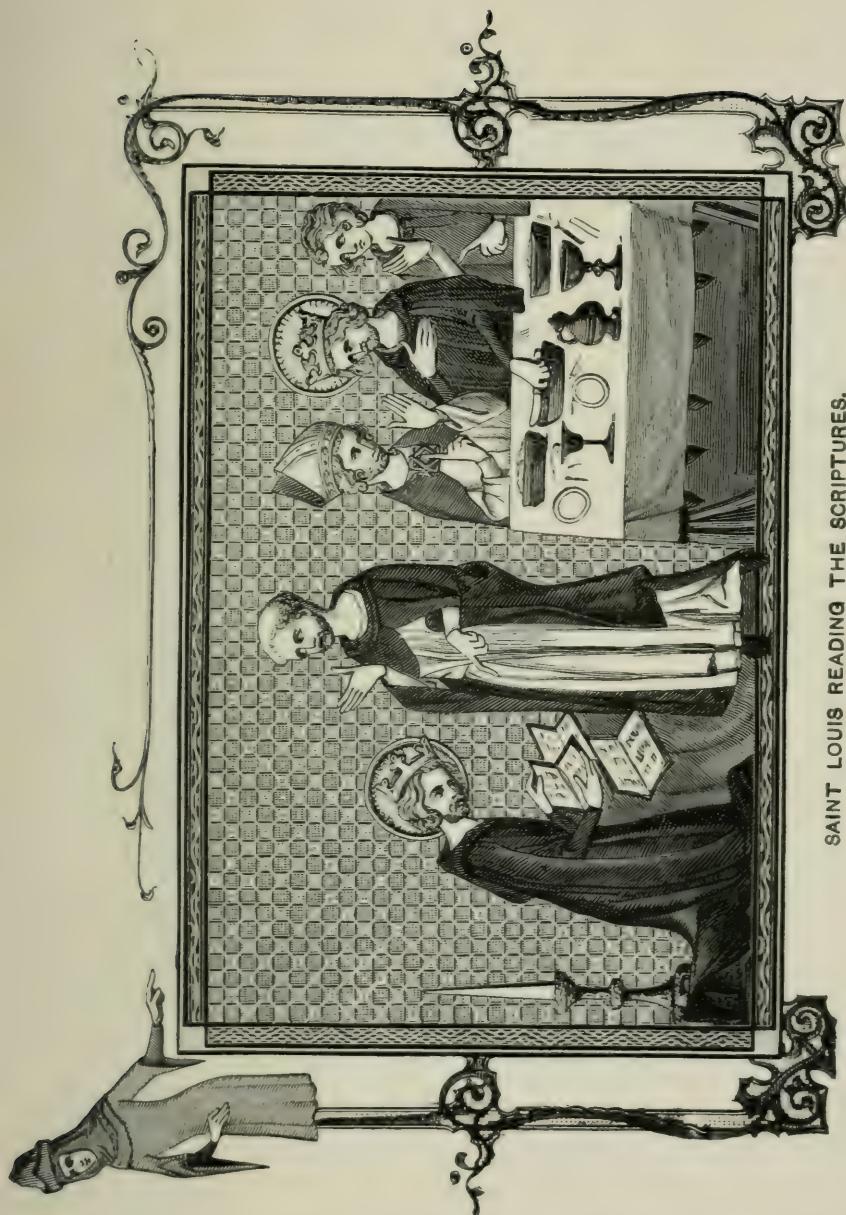
His faith in the Christian creed was firm and deep and not disturbed by any doubts or questionings. "He used to say," Joinville relates, "that we ought to believe in the articles of the Faith so strongly as never to contradict them by word or deed, whatever mischief or harm might happen to our bodies on that account ; and that the subtlety of the Enemy of mankind was such, that not being able to deprive men of the reward of their good works he laboured with all his might to make them die in doubt ; and that therefore we should keep watch over ourselves, and thrust away the snares and temptations of this kind which the Enemy sends." But he understood and sympathised with those who experienced and resisted the assaults of unbelief, quoting the case of a learned divine who confessed his doubtings to the Bishop of Paris and was consoled by him with the assurance that a faith which held out against strong temptation would be more highly honoured and rewarded than that which was never assailed ; just as the guard of a dangerous and exposed fortress was more honourable than that of one standing in perfect security beyond the reach of a foe. The King however used to declare, says the same biographer, that, to avoid running into peril, no man who was not a very great clerk should hold dispute or argument

with unbelievers about the Faith ; the layman when he heard the Christian religion defamed should defend it not with his tongue but with good blows of his sword.

Louis was a scholar and a patron of learning. He read daily after dinner in the Vulgate or in the works of Saint Augustine or some other of the Fathers, sometimes translating the Latin aloud for the benefit of his attendants, or discussing what he read with learned monks or prelates. While he was abroad he heard of a Sultan of the Saracens who had formed a library of all sorts of books bearing on the religion and philosophy of the East. He was stirred to emulate this example, and after his return caused copies to be made from the best originals which could be found of the Scriptures and of the writings of Saint Augustine, Saint Ambrose, Saint Jerome, Saint Gregory, and many other Fathers and Doctors, and built a library for them in his chapel, where he often studied himself and allowed anyone else who wished. He preferred, it is said, to have manuscripts copied rather than to buy those already existing, in order that the number of books might

be increased. In the last half of the reign  
**A.D.** Robert of Sorbonne founded his famous college of theology at Paris under royal patronage, getting a grant of land and houses from  
**1250-** the King. Other foundations belong to the same period ; notably the college of the Bernardins, that of Cluny, and the college of the Treasurers. The University itself, of which these were branches, flourished exceedingly after its restoration, though  
**A.D.**  
**1270**

**SAINT LOUIS READING THE SCRIPTURES.**  
FROM A FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT.





convulsed by the jealous rivalry between the mendicant orders and the secular doctors, which Louis strove to appease. He succeeded in arranging a compromise in 1256, but the Pope annulled it and the dispute raged some years longer. Among the celebrated theologians whose names appear in the history of the quarrel may be mentioned Thomas Aquinas of the Dominicans, Bonaventure of the Franciscans, William of Saint Amour, and Gerard of Abbeville of the seculars.

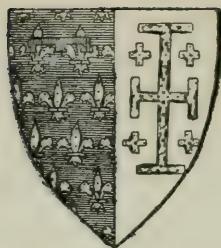
Joinville accuses the King of neglecting his wife and children in Palestine. His behaviour at home is certainly not open to that reproach. He lived with the Queen in mutual affection and confidence, though her interference was rarely admitted, even if it was offered, in public affairs. He took great pains with the education of his children, keeping them much in his company. As his sons grew up he caused them to attend him regularly to complines and also to other services and to sermons. On special occasions when he washed the feet of the poor or served them at table the Princes would do the same. The two that were born during the crusade were brought up in monastic houses at Paris, and Louis is said to have intended that they should take the vows of religion. Whether from want of inclination or for some other reason they never did this, but were married instead. Joinville has given a picture of the King's domestic life. "Before he went to bed he would make his children come to him, and would tell them of the deeds of good Kings and Emperors, saying that they should take example

from such. Also he would speak of the deeds of wicked princes who had lost their realms by luxury and rapine and avarice. ‘And these things,’ he would say, ‘I tell you that you may beware of them, lest God be angry.’ He made them learn their Hours of the Virgin and say their Hours of the Day before him, to accustom them to hear their Hours when they got lands of their own.” He was strict in exacting their obedience. “You have done very wrong,” he said to his son Philip and his son-in-law Theobald, when out of ceremony and respect they would not sit as close to him as he commanded, “since although you are my sons you did not do my bidding at once. See that it does not happen so again.” The instructions which he left to Philip have been mentioned above; they deal with the private no less than the public side of life. Other letters are extant written to his daughters Isabel and Margaret, exhorting them to piety and virtue and modest behaviour.

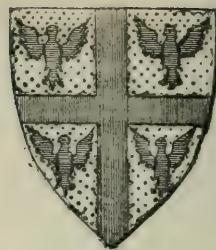
The health of Louis was weak, a constitution naturally delicate having been further damaged by the hardship and severe illness first of the Poitevin then of the Egyptian campaign. But none the less he led a life full of various activity. His days were occupied by the business of justice and affairs of state, besides the time given to charitable works, to prayer and to study, which last two often trenched upon the hours of sleep. His only diversion was reading and conversation; for in the latter part of his life he gave up hunting and hawking, and had never spent his leisure in dicing or any such idle amusement.

He was constantly travelling, mostly in the neighbourhood of Paris, as was natural. But he also visited Normandy and other parts of his domains, except the south. The existing records show an average of forty royal journeys every year. To this cause it may be attributed that the provinces were not neglected. In particular the King's care is recorded in relieving local famines, which sometimes prevailed owing to the failure of harvest in a place and the difficulty and slowness of traffic between different parts.

"Many men wondered," says a chronicler, "that one man, so meek, so gentle, not strong of body nor strenuous in labour, could reign peacefully over so great a kingdom and so many powerful lords, especially as he was neither lavish in presents nor very complaisant to some of them." But gentle of behaviour and feeble of body as he was, we are told that a certain reverence was felt by all who approached him, even men accustomed to the presence of kings. His name was honoured for saintliness and wisdom both in and beyond his realm, and his visible power and authority was enhanced by the renown of his personal virtues.



CHARLES, KING OF SICILY



MATTHEW OF MONTMORENCY

## CHAPTER XII

### SECOND CRUSADE AND DEATH OF LOUIS

1270

TOWARDS the end of his reign the King's heart turned to a design in which he could expect no favour or support from his counsellors. He had relinquished the crusade with reluctance. Soon after he was balked of his wish to become a monk a prospect of renewing it began to be opened. Europe was filled with tidings of fresh calamity in Palestine, which was overrun first by the Tartars, then by the victorious arms of the Sultan of Egypt, that Bibars who had fought at Mansourah; and successive Popes were exhorting the princes of Christendom to succour the distress of their brethren. To Louis it seemed a Divine call to resume his quest, to devote his declining years, as he had devoted the flower of his manhood, to the service of the Faith, and perhaps by a new and more prosperous attempt to achieve the high purpose which he had missed. As this hope slowly took shape in his mind he consulted secretly with Pope Clement IV., who after long wavering and doubt sent an encour-

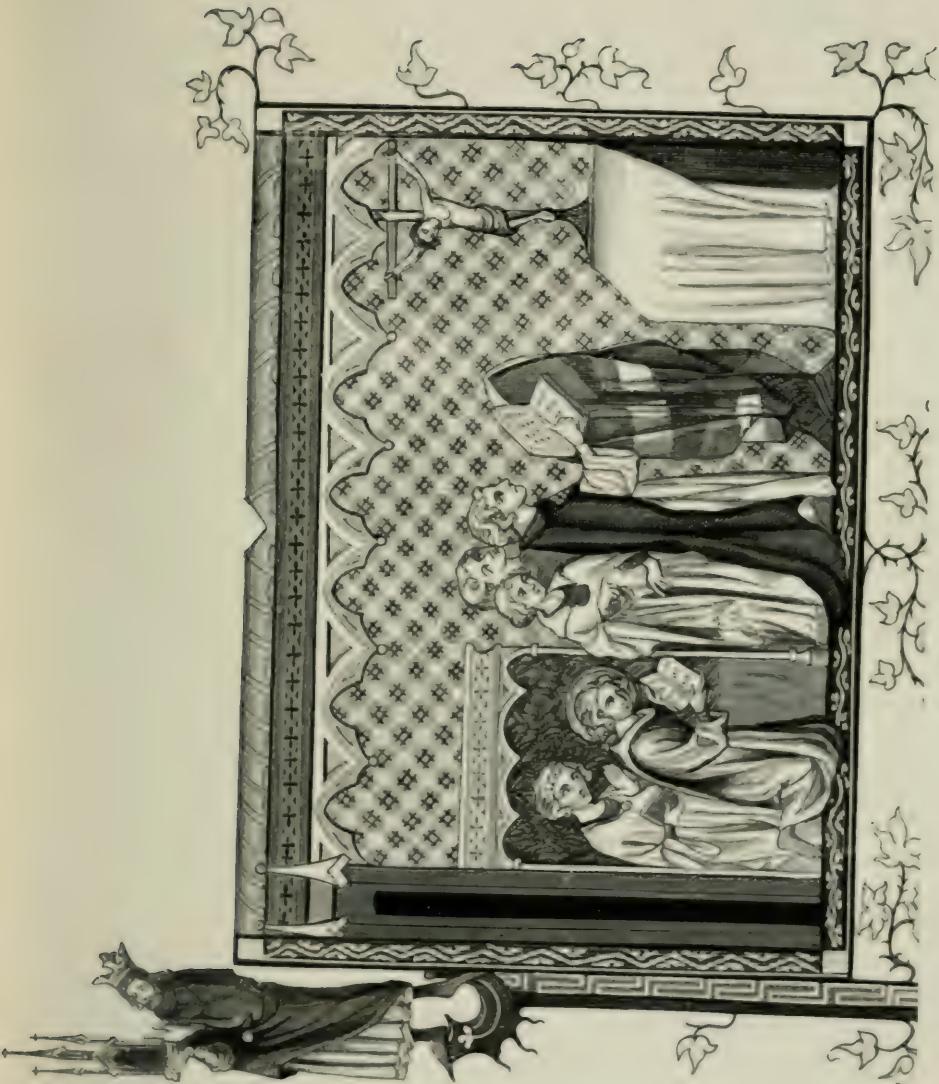
aging answer. By this his resolution, which continually grew stronger, was fixed; and in order to announce it he called a great Parliament at Paris for the Lent of 1267.

The narration of Joinville, who was one of those summoned, shows with what dismay the news was received by his people. Though the secret was still guarded, rumours were in the air. "When I had heard mass," says the writer, "I went to the King's chapel, and found the King on the platform where the relics were kept. While he was coming down, two knights, members of his Council, began to talk with one another. One of them said, 'Never believe me if the King does not take the cross here.' And the other replied, 'If he does it will be one of the most sorrowful days that ever was in France. For if we do not take the cross we shall lose the King, and if we do we shall lose God, seeing that we shall do it not for Him, but for fear of the King.'" Their words came true, for next day Louis took the cross in full Parliament. His three eldest sons, Philip, John, and Peter, and the Duke of Brittany followed his example; so a short time after did his son-in-law, Theobald of Navarre, and his nephew, Robert of Artois, son of him who had fallen in Egypt; so did a number of magnates, moved by their respect for the King and by his exhortations and those of the Legate, the Cardinal of Saint Cecilia, whom the Pope had commissioned to preach the crusade. But among the general body of barons there was dislike and reluctance. The enthusiasm of the kingdom had been exhausted by the previous expedition:

even men of a zealous spirit thought that enough had been done and suffered for honour and for the Faith, and let their minds dwell on immediate dangers and inconvenience more than on the prospect of ultimate glory and gain, while former ill-fortune had made them incredulous of success. Joinville, who speaks for himself, represented the feelings of many. "I was hard pressed by the King of France and the King of Navarre to take the cross. But I answered that while I had been in service of God and the King beyond sea the officers of both Kings had destroyed and impoverished my people, as I found on my return, by reason of which they and I would always be the poorer. So I told them I would remain at home to aid and defend my people, wishing to do God's will; for if I put my body in the peril of pilgrimage, seeing clearly that evil and damage would come to my vassals thereby, I should anger God, who gave His body to save his people."

"It is my opinion," he continues, "that they who advised the King to go committed mortal sin; since as long as he was in France the whole realm was at peace in itself and with all its neighbours, but no sooner had he gone than its state fell to worse."

It was three years before the crusade was ready to start, during which time Louis quietly followed the usual course of his life and government, examples and incidents of which have been related in the three preceding chapters. Meanwhile he was making his preparations. His eager persuasion drew a far greater number to join him than the few who had taken the cross in the assembly of Parliament at the



SAINT LOUIS AT PRAYER.  
FROM A FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT.



first surprise. Besides the King of Navarre and the Count of Artois, the Counts of Flanders and Saint Paul and La Marche and Soissons and many others adhered; and from abroad the King of Aragon and Prince Edward of England. It was necessary to raise money: even before he published his design the King had made a beginning by retrenching the expenses of his household. A tax was levied on the domain and large sums were received from the towns. The Pope granted a tithe on ecclesiastical revenues, which the clergy paid, not without murmurs, after sending deputies to Rome to protest, whom Clement dismissed with a fierce rebuke. Ships too were needed from the Venetians and Genoese, and were only obtained after much delay and trouble, owing to the quarrel of the two republics and to the Venetians' fear of losing their trade with Alexandria if they angered the Egyptian Sultan. There were threads of foreign and domestic affairs to wind up; marriages to contract; reconciliations to effect; a final extraordinary inspection of the domain to be carried out, for the purpose of repairing any wrongs and reforming any abuses which might be discovered.

At last all was ready. A Parliament was called at Paris for Candlemas 1270. The King made his will and appointed Matthew, Abbot of Saint Denis, and Simon of Nesle to be Regents in his absence. He lifted the oriflamme from the altar of Saint Denis, and received the staff and wallet from the new Legate, Raoul, Bishop and Cardinal of Alba, who was to accompany him. Then returning to Paris he visited

Notre Dame, and next day bade farewell to the Queen at Vincennes. He was in no condition to undertake the crusade had not an indomitable spirit sustained him. "Great sin was theirs who advised his going," says Joinville, "seeing the great feebleness of his body; for he could not bear to ride in a carriage or on horseback. Such was his weakness that he let me carry him in my arms from the house of the Count of Auxerre, where I took my leave of him, as far as the Cordeliers. But feeble though he was, perhaps he might have lived long enough if he had stayed at home, and have done much good and many pious works."

He reached Aigues Mortes by easy stages at the beginning of May, but found neither fleet nor army yet assembled. Accordingly he stayed in that neighbourhood for near two months, at the end of which time an immense number of men and ships was gathered in and about the port. On the 1st of July he embarked with his sons and nephew and sailed for Cagliari in Sardinia, where the forces of the expedition were to be collected. They made harbour after eight days of a rough crossing. The people of Cagliari being subjects of Pisa were enemies to the Genoese who manned the fleet, and were induced with difficulty to sell provisions and fresh water and to give shelter to the sick. The King remained on board his ship, waiting for the King of Navarre, the Count of Poitiers, and the rest, who joined him in a few days. A council was then held, in which it was determined that the course of the crusade should first be directed to Tunis. Several reasons went to

form the decision. It was reported that the Sultan of Tunis was inclined to become convert to Christianity. His ambassadors had visited France the year before and encouraged this belief. It was known that some congregations of Christians remained in those parts, and Louis was particularly struck with the notion of reviving the ancient strength and glories of the Church of Africa, with which he was acquainted from his study of Saint Augustine. He thought that the arrival of so powerful an army would confirm the disposition of the Sultan and overawe his Infidel subjects. In addition it was represented by many that, even should their hope be disappointed, the country was rich and its capital easy to take ; and that the Sultan of Egypt drew from that region great quantities of money, men, and horses, of which to have deprived him would be a considerable advantage in any subsequent campaign. A cause less avowed but perhaps not less effective lay in the policy of Charles of Anjou. As King of Sicily he claimed tribute from Tunis ; payment had been refused, and the prospect of enforcing and, if fortune favoured, of extending his rights led him to use his powerful influence in turning thither the plans of the crusaders.

The voyage was resumed on the 15th of July ; three days later the host disembarked between Tunis and Carthage, the Saracens, who were taken by surprise, offering hardly any opposition. The crusaders occupied a peninsula where they were distressed for want of water ; accordingly they moved next week towards Carthage which lay about a league distant.

Nothing remained of that ancient and famous city but a rude fortress, which a body of sailors, supported by five hundred crossbows and four troops of men-at-arms, captured by escalade. This gave the army a suitable place of encampment, as the surrounding country was laid out in gardens and plentifully irrigated by wells. But further operations were delayed. The expectation of the enemy's weakness proved as delusive as the rumour of his conversion. The Sultan, so far from welcoming the invader, imprisoned the principal of his Christian subjects and soldiers, intending to use them as hostages. The Saracens followed their usual tactics, surrounding and harrassing the outskirts of the camp with great numbers of horsemen, and continually threatening to attack, causing much annoyance though little damage, since they rarely ventured to come to close quarters. Ditches were dug to protect the tents, and it was resolved not to advance against Tunis until the arrival of the King of Sicily, who was expected from day to day and had desired particularly that no aggressive operation should be undertaken before he came, as he was still in negotiation with the Sultan.

Meanwhile the fierce heat of Africa and bad or insufficient food began to affect the army in its stationary quarters. Dysentery broke out and spread rapidly. Many perished, among them the Legate and Prince John, Count of Nevers. Louis was seized by the same sickness, to which his worn out frame fell an easy prey. He took to his bed the day of his son's death, the 3rd of August.

In a few days fever and ague supervened, and he began to prepare for the end. Calling his eldest son, Philip, himself sick of an ague, he delivered to him the instructions which he had drawn up for his guidance, written in French by his own hand. He made some additions to his will and disposed of several other outstanding matters. He was especially anxious about the preaching and propagation of the Faith among the Tunisians, and drew up directions for that purpose. He also gave audience to the ambassadors of the Greek Emperor, who had followed him to Africa to treat of the reunion of the Churches.

On Sunday the 24th of August, Saint Bartholomew's day, he received the sacrament from his confessor, and afterwards gave himself up to prayer and to begging the intercession of the Saints, particularly of Saint Denis, his patron. "We heard him," says one who was present, "often repeating to himself in a low voice the end of the collect of Saint Denis: 'Grant us Lord, we beseech Thee, for Thy love to despise the good fortune of this world and not to fear its adversity': and also the beginning of the collect of Saint James: 'Lord, be the Sanctifier and Guardian of Thy people.'" In the night he was heard singing the French hymn, '*Nous irons en Jérusalem.*' Next morning he fell asleep for a little while, and waking before midday uttered a verse of the Psalmist: "I will enter into Thy house; I will adore in Thy holy temple and will confess Thy name." These were his last words. He died about three o'clock in

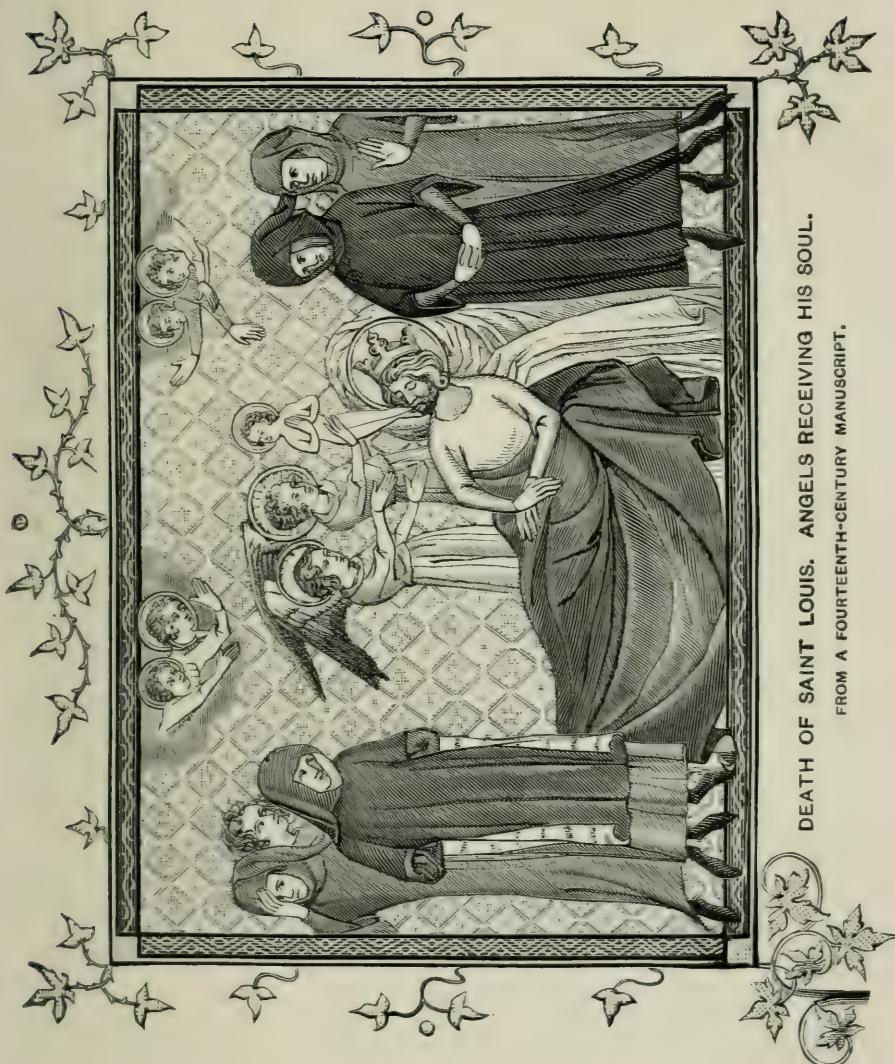
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the afternoon on a bed covered with ashes, to which he had asked to be removed, lying peacefully, with his arms crossed, and smiling.

At the moment he expired the fleet of the King of Sicily was entering the bay. But no one desired to pursue the expedition, even though three successful engagements were fought against the Saracens, and the arrival of Edward of England and other reinforcements increased the strength of the crusaders. A peace was patched up with Tunis after two months, and the army sailing to Sicily dispersed. A part travelled with Philip through Italy to France, carrying the bones of the King. On the way crowds of people flocked to see and touch the coffer in which they were borne. The heart and other portions of his body had been embalmed and buried in the church of Monreale, near to Palermo in Sicily. The bones were solemnly interred at Saint Denis in May of the following year. Before long miracles were reported to be worked at the tomb of Louis. An examination was ordered, on the result of which and on an investigation of his whole life, conducted

A.D.      through the testimony of many who had  
1297      lived with and known him, he was placed in  
                the calendar of Saints by Pope Boniface  
VIII., twenty-seven years after his death.

The personal character of Saint Louis speaks for itself. Praise would be tedious, and there is no need of apology. No sound of censure or detraction breaks the universal voice of reverence and admiration which has gone up from his own and from succeeding ages. He was one of those rare and happy



DEATH OF SAINT LOUIS. ANGELS RECEIVING HIS SOUL.  
FROM A FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT.



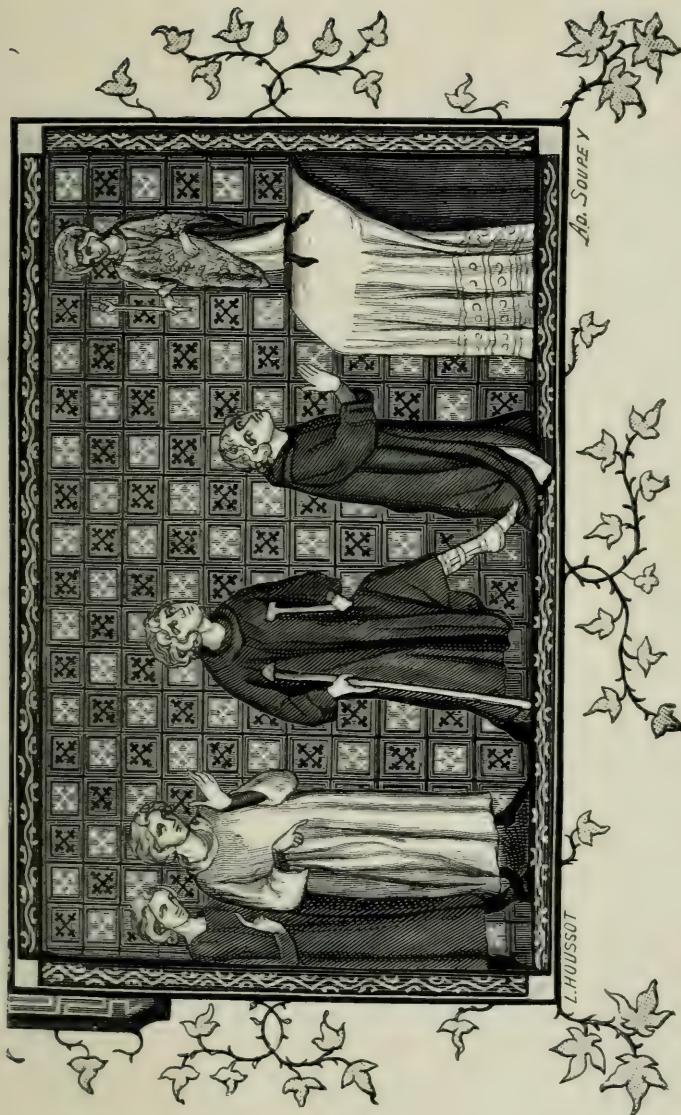
natures formed for saintship, from which the dross and flaws of human composition seem to have been left out, which find virtue facile, and attain holiness, not like some vehement forceful spirits through the fierce storm and stress of battling temptations, but by easy paths under sunny skies. His innate piety, improved by nurture and training, illuminated every relation of his life, and shone with as pure and steady a flame amid the glare which beats upon a throne as it might have in the still and obscure twilight of the cloister.

But since it was his lot to be born in a royal rather than in a private station, we cannot neglect to regard him in another aspect and consider his qualities not only as a man but as a king. A few monarchs have been saints, and many have been wise or fortunate rulers: Louis almost alone united the two characters. He possessed not only the passive but the active virtues and those which are best calculated to secure the welfare of society—justice, prudence, benevolence, industry. It was his good fortune to be placed in a position where those qualities were sufficient, in a time which had thrown off most of its disorders and not yet contracted others, and which required a soothing regimen of good government more than inspired treatment or heroic remedies. His reign was a period of formation and settlement rather than of growth. He was not a great conqueror or reformer or legislator. He had neither a brilliant genius nor an originating mind nor a high capacity for war. Yet by force of his personal virtues he raised the reputation and power of his

realm and crown higher than any of his ancestors; and infused into both a lasting strength and vigour and self-confidence more valuable than any material gain.

Other Kings of France have made greater additions to their territories. Louis himself, had he wished, might perhaps have anticipated the conquests of many centuries, might have driven the English from the south and extended his borders to the Rhine and the Alps. This was not done; but previous acquisitions were completed and consolidated, and, what was more important, a national feeling began to spring up. The outlying provinces, shadowed by the King's renown, began to feel, though faintly, that they were members of the same body, governed by a common head. The external prestige of the French Crown gained no less, as foreign nations saw in the power and goodness of its holder the supreme representation of earthly majesty.

It was within France, however, that the reign of Louis had its greatest influence and effect. The part which he took in developing the system of monarchic government has been touched on in a former chapter. The improvement in the machinery of administration, the advance in the study and arrangement of the laws, the assertion of the liberties of the Gallican Church, which marked this time, were not so much his conscious and deliberate work as the natural outcome of forces and tendencies already existing and active. But he directed and modified in some sort the movement of the current,



SICK AND INFIRM BEFORE AN IMAGE OF SAINT LOUIS, BESEECHING HIS INTERCESSION.

FROM A FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT.



though without a clear vision of its meaning and ultimate end. Moreover by the beneficence of his government, the strictness of his justness, the fairness and moderation of his dealings, he moralised the principles at work and lent to their later development an authority and sanction by which his successors gladly profited. The shield of his honoured name was thrown over them ; a legal code appeared under the title of the Establishments of Saint Louis, and in a Pragmatic Sanction of Saint Louis the native Church pretended to see the foundation of its privileges.

This then was his chief and permanent gift to France, that he moralised the monarchy, and gave it that spiritual life without which any institution is only a barren mechanical collection of names and forms, incapable of growth or reparation, which will crumble and fall at the first violent shock. He embodied and energised almost at the beginning those elements in the kingly system on which its essential life depended ; the elements, that is, of order and justice. By the excellence of the monarch the system received its most perfect manifestation. Louis, just and a lover of peace above all men, exercised those virtues to the full in his public conduct, and left at once a model to his successors and a convincing example to the remembrance of his subjects of the benefits conferred by the sway of a righteous King. Under him the bright side of the monarchic rule was brought out in glowing colours, imprinting an indelible picture on the minds of the people, while its darker aspect was kept back, its oppression and corruption and arbitrariness. The merits of his

government, contrasted with the disorder and ill state of other nations, were enough to justify the language of the chronicler, that “the kingdom of France in his time was like the sun in heaven in comparison with the rest.”

The crusades of Louis, however much they added to his reputation for holiness, have been generally condemned on grounds of prudence and policy. There was no longer any danger to Europe from the Saracens, it is said, and the task of recovering and holding Palestine should have been recognised as desperate. In the vain endeavour he deserted his kingdom and spent the blood and treasure of his people. But, if the motive may be regarded, he was induced by piety not ambition, as his contemporaries all allowed, admiring a zeal which in themselves was mostly smothered by worldly wisdom. If a single and disinterested aim, apart from the prospect of selfish advantage, can justify any war, his crusades were justified. And even on considerations of policy alone, it is not for an age which is beginning to chafe at Mohammedan dominion in western Asia to judge too harshly the last attempt which was made to overthrow it.

The people of France long lamented the loss of the King who had governed them so well; and the ballads of both North and South attest the love and sorrow of the whole nation. But perhaps the best epitaph of Louis is found in the brief notice of an annalist writing a few years after his death: “There was peace in his time; he loved God and Holy Church; and they say that he is with the Saints.”



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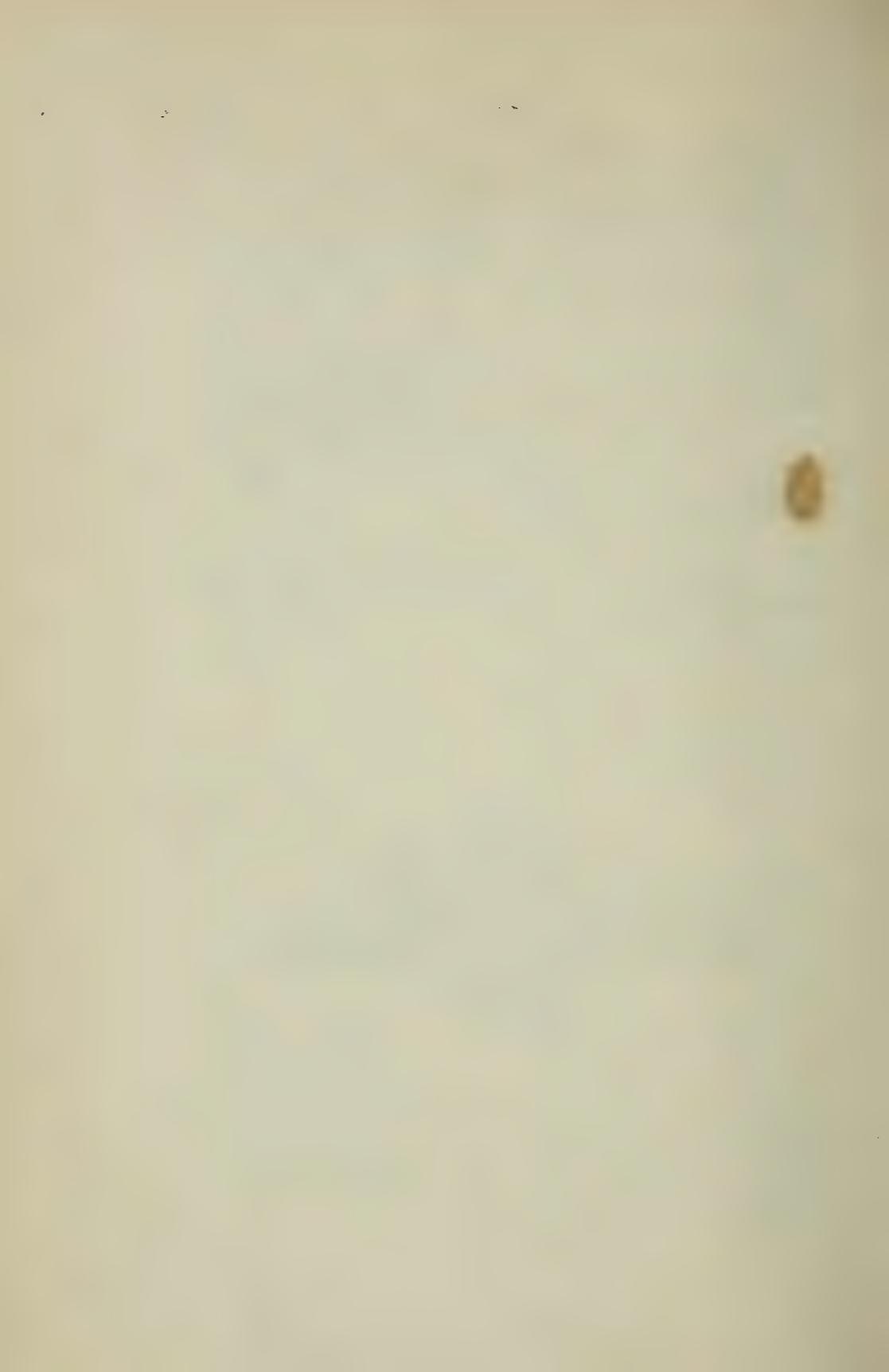
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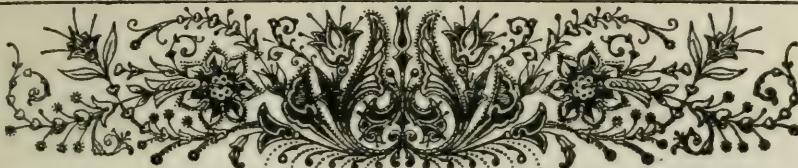
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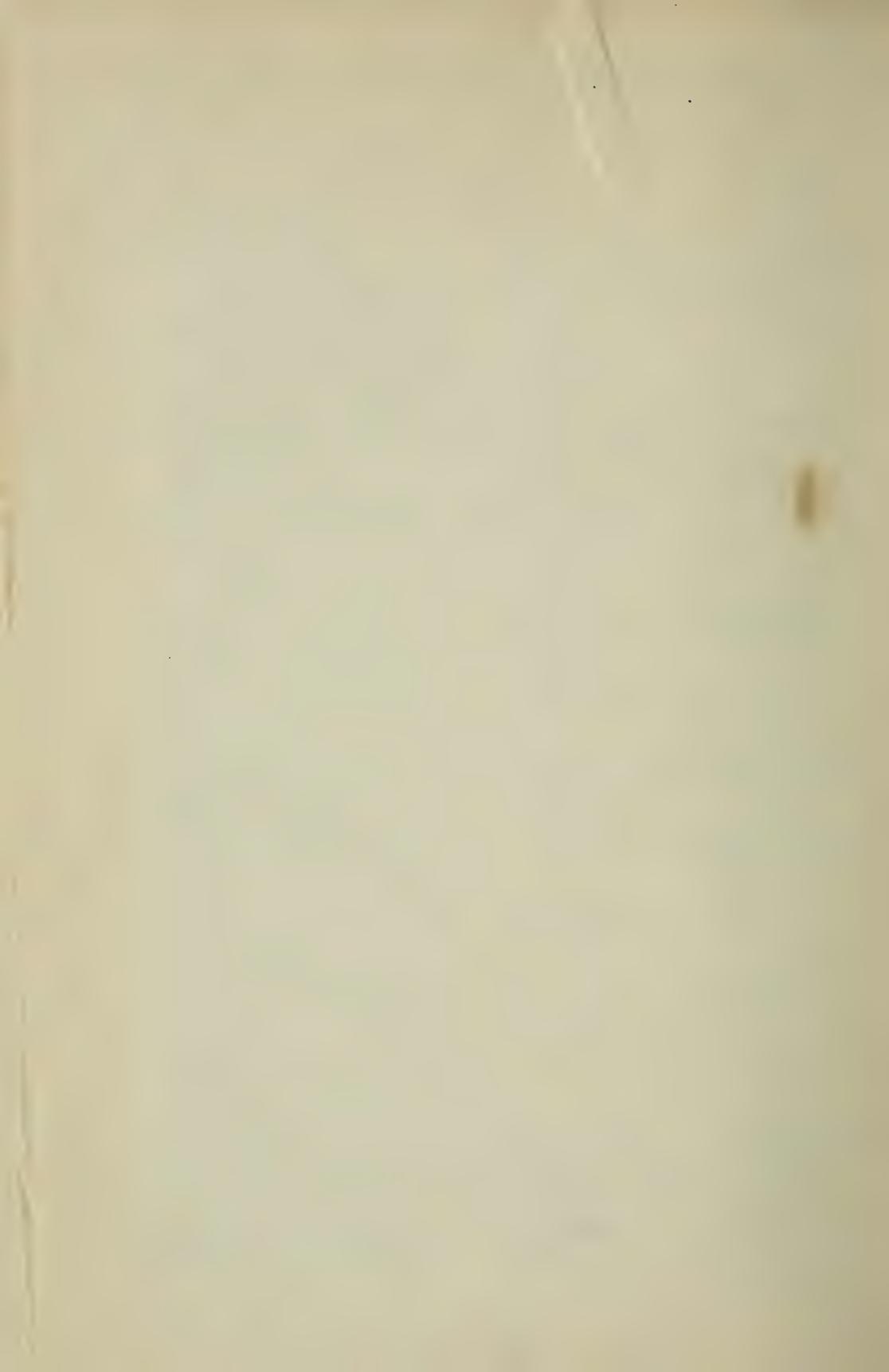
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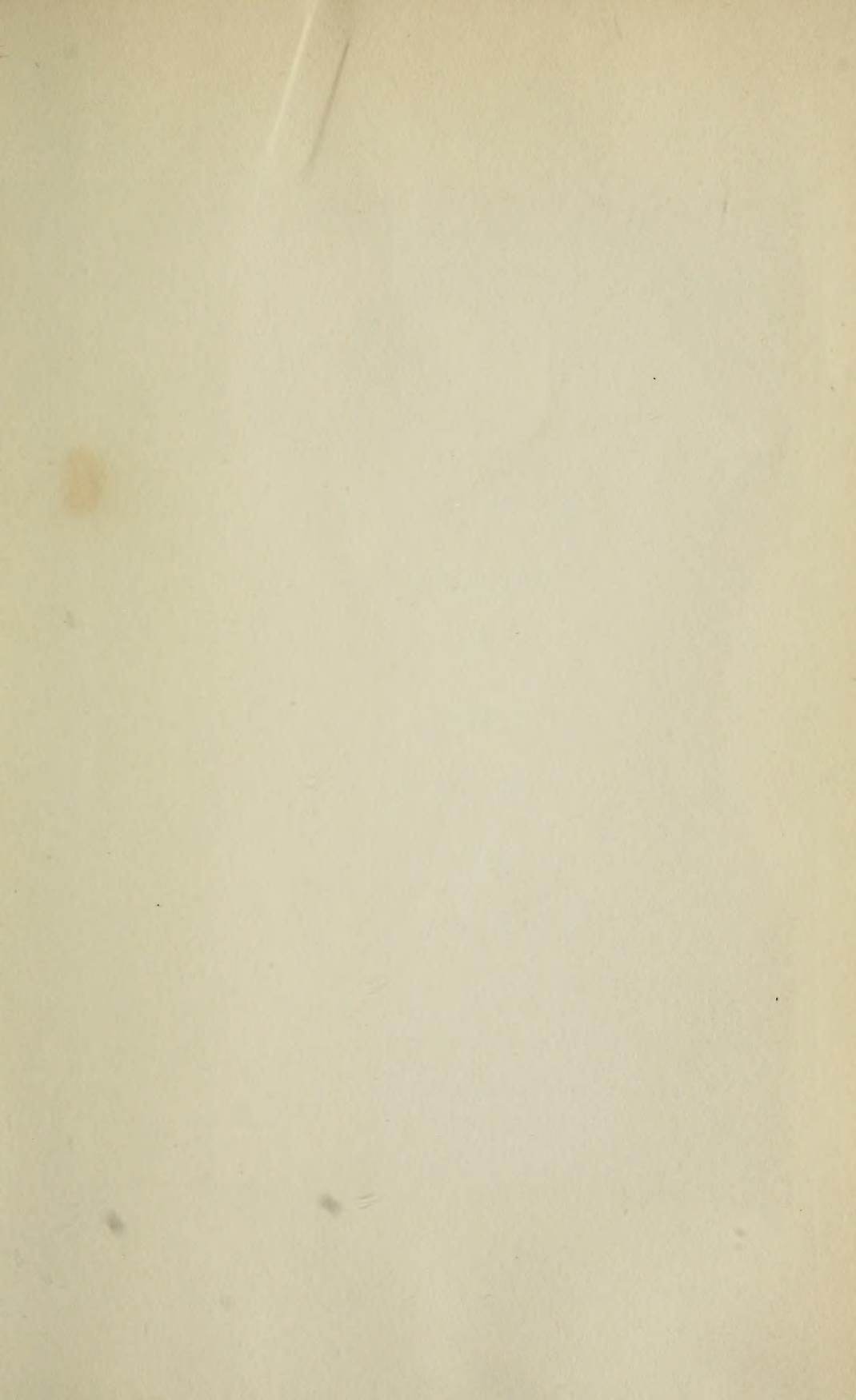
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